



FIRE AWAY

A firefighter hoses down hot spots along Highway 243 on Thursday, July 26, 2018, near Idyllwild, Calif.

Associated Press
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House backs defense bill with military pay raise, parade

By MATTHEW DALY, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The House on Thursday approved a \$716 billion defense policy bill that would give the military a 2.6 percent pay hike, the largest in nine years.

The compromise bill weakens a bid to clamp down on the Chinese telecom giant ZTE and allows the president to waive sanctions against countries that have bought Russian weapons but now want to buy U.S. military equipment.

Defense Secretary Jim Mattis sought the waiver, saying it would help countries such as India that are seek-



This March 27, 2008, file photo, shows the Pentagon in Washington.

Associated Press

formation to nations hostile to the U.S., namely Iran and North Korea, in violation of trade laws.

Trump warned in May that the ban was causing heavy job losses in China and said he had discussed the matter with Chinese President Xi Jinping. The Commerce Department reached a deal with ZTE to lift the ban in June, allowing business with U.S. companies to resume.

The bill retains language blocking U.S. government purchases and contracts with ZTE, which supporters noted in touting the compromise.

"ZTE will continue to be punished, and the government procurement ban on ZTE and Huawei," another Chinese company, will stay intact, said Sen. David Perdue, R-Ga. "Overall, this is win for the United States, not for ZTE."

House Armed Services Committee Chairman Mac Thornberry, R-Texas, said the defense bill will strengthen military readiness, provide troops a needed pay raise and "drive further innovation in emerging technologies to secure our military advantage."

The waiver language on Russia sanctions "provides flexibility for strategic partners and allies" such as India "to move away from the use of Russian military equipment to American equipment," Thornberry said.

But New Jersey Sen. Robert Menendez, the top Democrat on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, said the waiver undermines U.S. efforts to crack down on Russia in the wake of its interference in the 2016 elections.

"I'm concerned it may not only create a waiver but it may also waive Congress's right to bring a vote on any arms sale to those countries," Menendez said.

The defense bill drops a Republican proposal that would have barred the Fish and Wildlife Service from using the Endangered Species Act to protect two chicken-like birds in the Western half of the U.S. □

ing to "pull away from the Russian orbit."

The waiver would not benefit Russia, Mattis said in a letter to Congress: "It will only benefit the U.S. and countries willing to pursue a security relationship with us," including Vietnam and Indonesia.

The bill does not fund President Donald Trump's request for a new "Space Force" as an independent military service branch, but authorizes a military parade Trump wants in Washington in November.

The bill was negotiated by House and Senate lawmakers after competing versions were approved in each chamber.

It was approved, 359-54, and now goes to the Senate.

White House press secretary Sarah Huckabee Sanders applauded the bill's passage and urged swift passage in the Senate.

The bill "supports the president's request for a pay raise for our troops and rebuilds the military to deter adversaries and maintain the administration's posture of peace through strength," she said.

Lawmakers from both parties have expressed outrage that the revised legislation guts a provision to reinstate penalties against ZTE and restrict the Chinese company's ability to buy U.S. component parts. ZTE was almost forced out of business after being accused of selling sensitive in-

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Governor declares emergency as fires rage throughout state

By **MARCIO SANCHEZ**
Associated Press

IDYLLWILD, Calif. (AP) — Fire stoked by hot and windy weather raged through a forest in far northern California on Thursday. In mountain communities east of Los Angeles, calmer conditions aided firefighters on the lines of a suspected arson wildfire that forced thousands of people to flee.

California Gov. Jerry Brown on Thursday issued emergency proclamations in both Riverside County in the south and Shasta County in the north. The declarations authorize the state to rally resources to local government.

In the north, new evacuations were ordered for communities in the wilderness recreation region near Whiskeytown Lake as that wildfire tripled in size to more than 31 square miles (80 square kilometers). It had already forced residents out of French Gulch, a hamlet dating to the Gold Rush.

French Gulch resident Raquel Hines said she had two hours to evacuate and that others in the former mining town had as little as 30 minutes to leave.

The community has faced two wildfires in the last two weeks, Hines said.

"It's terrifying. You know you're frightened a little bit because you don't know if you're going to come back to your house and the town is going to be different," she told KRCR-TV.

Cal Fire Unit Chief Mike Hebrard told the Record Searchlight newspaper that the blaze made a huge push overnight and that engine crews were in the community of Old Shasta

trying to save structures. Hundreds of miles to the south, winds were absent over the fire in Southern California's San Jacinto Mountains. But temperatures were rapidly rising, and forecasters said highs could hit 100 degrees (38 Celsius). They also warned of possible afternoon wind gusts that could create dangerous fire conditions. Elsewhere in the state, a huge forest fire continued to grow outside Yosemite National Park. A total of 100 homes were still considered under threat in the San Francisco Bay community of Clayton, although firefighters had stopped the progress of a small fire there after one house burned.

The blaze in the San Jacinto Mountains erupted Wednesday and quickly turned into a wall of flame that torched timber and tinder-dry brush. In a matter of hours, it grew to 7.5 square miles (19 square kilometers).

About 3,200 people in the town of Idyllwild and nearby communities were ordered to evacuate. An estimated 600 homes were threatened.

The fire was the largest of at least five that police believe were purposely set Wednesday by a man whose car was reportedly spotted at the starting point of the blaze in Riverside County, officials said. Brandon N. McGlover, 32, of Temecula was booked on suspicion of five counts of arson, state fire officials said. It wasn't clear whether he had an attorney.

Authorities ordered residents to leave Idyllwild and several neighboring communities, home to about 12,000 people.



A firefighter watches as the Cranston fire grows to more 1,200 acres in the San Bernardino National Forest above Hemet, Calif., Wednesday, July 25, 2018.

Associated Press

William Blodgett of Idyllwild said he couldn't get home because of the fire and had to wait along with others at a gas station in nearby Mountain Center — until the fire hopped a highway and began to move in his direction.

"We were all peeling out of there as fast as we could," he told KNBC-TV. "It was apocalyptic."

Horses and other animals were taken to shelters, as were several hundred children who were evacuated from summer camps. About 200 were at a local high school serving as a shelter, KCAL-TV reported. The fire in the San Bernardino National Forest sent up a cloud 50,000 feet high that was so enormous it created its own weather in the form of lightning, the National Weather Service reported. Throughout the day, helicopters and planes dumped water and fire retardant that turned swathes

of land and homes pink. Fire engines also were stationed to protect homes. Yosemite Valley, the scenic heart of the national park, was closed at noon Wednesday during the height of tourist season as smoke cast a pall on the region from a fire in the Sierra Nevada. The closure was heartbreaking for travelers, many of whom mapped out their trips months in advance to hike and climb amid the spectacular views of cascading waterfalls and sheer rock faces. "We had one guest who planned a weeklong trip," said Tom Lambert, who owns a vacation rental property near Yosemite Valley. "It was a father-daughter trip, for her high school graduation ... Now it's done. It's sad." Another guest had to delay plans to climb Half Dome. Officials emphasized that Yosemite wasn't in imminent danger from the fire,

which grew to more than 67 square miles (173 square kilometers) in the adjacent Sierra National Forest. Authorities decided on the shutdown to allow crews to perform protective measures such as burning away brush along roadways without having to deal with traffic in the park that welcomes 4 million visitors annually.

Yosemite Valley will be closed until at least Sunday, along with a winding, mountainous, 20-mile (32-kilometer) stretch of California's State Route 41 that leads into the area, Gediman said.

At least 1,000 campground and hotel bookings were canceled — to say nothing of the impact on day visitors, park workers and small businesses along the highway, Gediman said. The last time the 7.5-mile-long (12-kilometer-long) valley was closed because of fire was 1990, he said. □

Ryan opposes Rosenstein impeachment try, dooming it for now

By MARY CLARE JALONICK and CHAD DAY
Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) —

House Speaker Paul Ryan spoke out against an effort by a small group of conservatives to impeach Deputy Attorney General Rod Rosenstein on Thursday, dooming the endeavor for now and easing a months-long standoff between House Republicans and the Justice Department.

Ryan said the tussle over document requests between House Republicans and Rosenstein, who oversees the federal Trump-Russia investigation, doesn't rise to the level of "high crimes and misdemeanors" that could warrant impeachment under the Constitution.

"I don't think we should be cavalier with this process or with this term," Ryan said. He also said he is encouraged by progress on the document production.

Ryan made the comments a day after the group of 11 House Republicans sharply escalated the extended clash with the Justice Department by filing articles of impeachment against Rosenstein, who oversees special counsel Robert Mueller's investigation.

Their move late Wednesday came after months of criticism aimed at the department — and the Russia investigation in particular — from President Donald Trump and his Republican allies in Congress. Trump has fumed about Mueller's probe and has repeatedly called it a "witch hunt," a refrain echoed by some of the lawmakers.

Mueller is investigating Russian interference in the 2016 election and whether Trump's campaign was involved.

The impeachment effort was led by North Carolina Rep. Mark Meadows, the chairman of the conservative House Freedom Caucus who talks to Trump frequently and often defends him to colleagues.

As Ryan voiced his disapproval, Meadows acknowledged that he didn't currently have the votes



Speaker of the House Paul Ryan, R-Wis., meets with reporters as lawmakers prepare to break until Sept. 4, on Capitol Hill in Washington, Thursday, July 26, 2018.

Associated Press

to pass the impeachment resolution and said he wouldn't use procedural maneuvers to trigger an immediate vote — something he had threatened to do. The House left Thursday afternoon for a five-week recess.

Instead, Meadows said he had a commitment from leaders to vote on holding Rosenstein in contempt of Congress when the House returns in September if certain documents are still outstanding. The agreement came after discussions on the House floor with Judiciary Committee Chairman Robert Goodlatte, R-Va., and the No. 3 House GOP leader, Rep. Steve Scalise of Louisiana.

The contempt resolution would first have to move through the Judiciary Committee, according to Republican aides.

Meadows said the five-week delay would give the department "one last chance" to deliver. He didn't rule out trying for an impeachment vote in the future.

"Now it's in Rod Rosenstein's court," Meadows said.

Ryan's tone was far different.

"We do not have full compliance, and we have to get full compliance, but we have been making tremendous progress to that point," he said of multiple document requests.

Meanwhile, Attorney General Jeff Sessions defended Rosenstein in a Boston speech, saying he has the "highest confidence" in his top deputy. Rosenstein has overseen the Russia investigation since last year, when Sessions recused himself following reports of his own meeting with the Russian ambassador.

Asked in May about rumblings that House Republicans might move to impeach, Rosenstein was defiant.

"I think they should understand by now, the Department of Justice is not going to be extorted," he said.

Meadows, Ohio Rep. Jim Jordan and the other Republicans who introduced the resolution have criticized Rosenstein and Justice Department officials as not being responsive enough as House committees have demanded documents related to the Russia investigation's inception and a now-closed in-

vestigation into Democrat Hillary Clinton's emails.

The five articles of impeachment would charge Rosenstein with failing to produce information, though the department has provided lawmakers with more than 800,000 documents. The resolution notes that Rosenstein was one of several department officials who approved what some Republicans say was improper surveillance of Trump campaign adviser Carter Page. The impeachment resolution also criticizes Rosenstein for refusing to produce a memo that outlines the scope of the investigation and questions whether the investigation was started on legitimate grounds.

It is highly unusual, if not unprecedented, for lawmakers to demand documents that are part of an ongoing criminal investigation.

At a House hearing last month, Rosenstein, along with FBI Director Christopher Wray, faced angry Republicans who alleged bias at the FBI and suggested the department has conspired against Trump. Still, some GOP lawmakers said they would draw the line at impeachment.

"Impeachment is a punishment; it's not a remedy," said House Oversight and Government Reform Chairman Trey Gowdy, who has led one of several House GOP investigations into the department and has complained of anti-Trump bias. "If you are looking for documents, then you want compliance, and you want whatever moves you toward compliance."

The impeachment resolution came about two hours after Meadows, Gowdy, Goodlatte and other GOP lawmakers met with Justice Department officials about the documents. The department has created new search systems, set up classified reading rooms and tasked dozens of employees to produce the hundreds of thousands of documents that Republican lawmakers have requested over the past year.

Democrats on the House Judiciary, Oversight and Government Reform and intelligence committees called the impeachment effort a "panicked and dangerous attempt to undermine an ongoing criminal investigation in an effort to protect President Trump as the walls are closing in around him and his associates."

So far, the special counsel has charged 32 people and three companies. That includes four Trump campaign advisers and 12 Russian intelligence officers.

Democratic Reps. Jerrold Nadler of New York, Elijah Cummings of Maryland and Adam Schiff of California said Rosenstein "stands as one of the few restraints against the overreaches of the president and his allies in Congress."

In addition to Meadows and Jordan, the Republican lawmakers who sponsored the impeachment articles are Reps. Jody Hice of Georgia, Jeff Duncan of South Carolina, Andy Biggs of Arizona, Louie Gohmert of Texas, Matt Gaetz of Florida, Scott DesJarlais of Tennessee, Paul Gosar of Arizona, Bill Posey of Florida and Scott Perry of Pennsylvania. □

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Court: Starbucks, others must pay workers for off clock work

By SUDHIN THANAWALA

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) —

Starbucks and other employers in California must pay workers for minutes they routinely spend off the clock on tasks such as locking up or setting the store alarm, the state Supreme Court ruled Thursday.

The unanimous ruling was a big victory for hourly workers in California and could prompt additional lawsuits against employers in the state.

The ruling came in a lawsuit by a Starbucks employee, Douglas Troester, who argued that he was entitled to be paid for the time he spent closing the store after he had clocked out.

Troester said he activated the store alarm, locked the front door and walked co-workers to their cars — tasks that required him to work for four to 10 additional minutes a day.

Starbucks said it was disappointed with the ruling. In a brief filed with the California Supreme Court, attorneys for Starbucks said Troester's argument could lead to "innumerable lawsuits over a few seconds of time." The U.S. Chamber of Commerce in a court filing also warned of the possibility of "significant liability" to businesses in the state.

A U.S. District Court rejected Troester's lawsuit on the grounds that the time he spent on those tasks was

minimal. But the California Supreme Court said a few extra minutes of work each day could "add up."

Troester was seeking payment for 12 hours and 50 minutes of work over a 17-month period. At \$8 an hour, that amounts to \$102.67, the California Supreme Court said.

"That is enough to pay a utility bill, buy a week of groceries, or cover a month of bus fares," Associate Justice Goodwin Liu wrote. "What Starbucks calls 'de minimis' is not de minimis at all to many ordinary people who work for hourly wages."

The ruling also applies to tasks done before the workday begins, said Bryan Lazarski, an attorney in Los Angeles who handles wage claims against employers.

Lazarski said he expects the ruling to open the door to additional lawsuits by workers in similar situations as Troester. But he also expects lawsuits that "test the boundary of what this case says" to determine how much time spent doing work off the clock is enough to get paid.

The court in Thursday's ruling said it was not closing the door on all claims by employers that the amount of additional work was too negligible.

"The court is saying, 'We haven't really drawn a line with regard to what is trivial

and what is not trivial, but in this case, the time that the employee was not compensated was significant,'" said Veena Dubal, a labor law expert at the University of California, Hastings College of the Law.

Associate Justice Leandra Kruger wrote separately to say that there may be some periods of time that are "so brief, irregular of occurrence, or difficult to accurately measure or estimate," that requiring an employer to account for them would not be reasonable.

She cited as examples a glitch that delays logging in to a computer to start a shift or having to read and acknowledge an email or text message about a schedule change.

The federal court that threw out Troester's lawsuit also said it would be hard for an employer to track the additional time that he worked. But Liu said employers could use technology for that or restructure employees' work so they don't have any tasks after they clock out.

Employers can also estimate the additional time, he said.

Troester appealed the U.S. District Court's decision to the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals. The appeals court asked the California Supreme Court to determine whether a federal rule per-



This April 6, 2012 file photo shows a Starbucks store on the Embarcadero in San Francisco. Starbucks and other employers in California must pay workers for minutes they routinely spend off the clock on tasks such as locking up or setting the store alarm, the state Supreme Court ruled Thursday, July 26, 2018.

Associated Press

mitting employers under some circumstances to require employees to work as much as 10 minutes a day

without compensation applied under state law.

The lawsuit now returns to the 9th Circuit. □

Court affirms order blocking Indiana ultrasound abortion law

INDIANAPOLIS (AP) — An Indiana mandate that forces women to undergo an ultrasound at least 18 hours before having an abortion is "an undue burden" that saddles some

women with lengthy travel and additional expenses, a federal appeals court ruled this week. The 7th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals on Wednesday affirmed a preliminary injunction issued in

April 2017 by U.S. District Judge Tanya Walton Pratt. The injunction blocked the ultrasound waiting period that then-Indiana Gov. Mike Pence signed into law in March 2016. □

AP-NORC Poll: Latinos see health care communication barriers

By **EMILY SWANSON** and **RUSSELL CONTRERAS**

WASHINGTON (AP) — Nearly 6 in 10 Hispanic adults have had a difficult time communicating with a health care provider because of a language or cultural barrier, and when they do they often turn to outside sources for help, according to a new study conducted by The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research. The survey finds that half of those who have faced those barriers turned to a family member or to another health care provider for assistance. In addition, more than 1 in 4 looked to a translator, public resources in their community or online sources for help when they faced those issues.

Antonio Torres, 53, of Orlando, Florida, who is bilingual and legally blind, told The AP he regularly struggles to understand the medical terms used by doctors and nurses.

"When I tell them I don't understand them, they'll bring someone over to speak to me in Spanish and I don't understand them, either,"



In this file photo taken Nov. 22, 2014, Blue Bridge Benefits LLC agent Patricia Sarabia, right, and Adolfo Briceno, left, with Spanish Speaking LLC, help a potential customer with Blue Cross Blue Shield at a kiosk promoting Obama Care at Compare Foods in Winston-Salem, N.C.

Associated Press

said Torres, who is Puerto Rican and was raised in New York. "We didn't grow up speaking that formal Spanish, so I have no idea what they are saying."

At times, Torres said he

even gets medicine with his name misspelled on the bottle. "And I don't know if I'm taking my medicine or someone else's," he said.

The language and cultural barriers in health care for

Latinos are something advocates have been pointing out for years.

In 2014, for example, the Obama administration faced criticism following the rollout of the Spanish version of the federal health care website, CuidadoDeSalud.gov. The translations were so clunky and full of grammatical mistakes that critics say they must have been computer-generated. The website also translated "premium" into "prima," the Spanish word more commonly used to mean a female cousin among Mexican-Americans and Mexican immigrants.

Along with communication challenges, many Hispanics are concerned about language or cultural accommodations for people in their community who seek long-term care services.

Fewer than half say it would be easy for older Latinos in their area to find a nursing home or assisted living facility with staff that speaks their language, or to find a home health aide who does. Even fewer — less than 3 in 10 — say the same about finding long-term care providers who can

prepare the kind of food they are used to. Some have concerns about finding nursing homes and assisted-living facilities that will respect their religious or spiritual beliefs, though fewer have the same concern about home health aides.

Torres said he's not confident he'll find a culturally sensitive nursing home when he's gets older. "I'd rather just live alone and poison myself by accident rather than stay in one of those homes right now," he said.

Like other older Americans, many Hispanics age 40 and older expect to rely on government programs like Social Security, Medicare and Medicaid to pay for long-term care services, even though Medicare does not cover most nursing care or home health aides. But only about 2 in 10 think any of these programs will still be providing at least the same level of benefits five years from now. Just 15 percent of older Hispanics are very confident they will be able to pay for their own future long-term care needs.

The survey also finds that a large majority of older Hispanics are open to using at least one type of telemedicine to receive care, including phone consultations, text messages or video services like Skype, although older Hispanics are somewhat less likely than others in their age group to say they'd be comfortable using some types of telemedicine.

Gabriel Vargas, 41, of Lancaster, South Carolina, who is from Veracruz, Mexico, said he felt these resources in his area already were helping Latino residents. The growth of online options, he said, is breaking down the stigma held by Hispanics around regular checkups and preventative care.

"There's a nonprofit group here that goes out of its way to help," said Vargas, whose first language is Spanish. "Maybe 10 years ago, it was tough. But today I think it's become easier." □

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Water starts receding in central Pennsylvania after days of floods

By MARK SCOLFORO

Associated Press

HUMMELSTOWN, Pa. (AP)

— Floodwaters began to recede in central Pennsylvania on Thursday, leaving behind a film of mud and headaches for motorists trying to navigate around dozens of roads closed to traffic.

Skies were clear after five days of downpours that brought up to a foot of rain in a swath of Pennsylvania from York County along the Maryland line to the Williamsport region in the north. Thunderstorms are forecast for Friday.

Residents along the Swatara Creek in Hummelstown said it crested about 2 a.m., but the Hersheypark amusement park just upstream remained closed.

"This is a disaster," said medical school professor Arun Das as he photographed the Swatara Creek not far from his home, ticking off the major roads that remained impassible. "Grandview, closed, Route 39, closed, 740, closed."

A few blocks away, retired government contractor Rick Flage, whose home borders the stream, said the waters were about 9 feet lower than after the remnants of Tropical Storm

Lee, which ruined several of his neighbors' homes in 2011.

"We just have to clean up," Flage said Thursday. "No big deal — we have plenty of time."

State police said water conditions remained too dangerous to conduct an all-out search of the Conewago Creek near Elizabethtown for a 19-year-old woman last seen Monday while trying to cross the swollen stream, but aerial and searches continued.

Fewer than 10 people showed up Wednesday at a Red Cross shelter at Hershey High School, mostly for a meal and shower, but one family spent the night, said disaster program specialist Kam Kobeissi. The Red Cross closed the shelter by lunchtime Thursday. A spokesman for Dauphin County said officials were working with the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency to determine the extent of property damage.

In Tremont, about 40 miles (65 kilometers) northeast of Harrisburg, floodwaters caused catastrophic damage to the American Legion Post building, and a Family Dollar store was expected to be closed for a

week after getting several inches of water, the Pottsville Republican Herald reported. A collapsed road in Tower City opened up a 5-foot hole.

A retaining wall along the Codorus Creek gave way in York City at a major bridge, closing a lane of traffic, and officials blamed it on the heavy rains. □



Louis Binino, of Mount Joy, Pa., looks at his SUV, far left, that became stranded in high water along Rt 772 in Mount Joy, Pa., Wednesday, July 25, 2018.

Associated Press



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France and Spain want US action on steel, aluminum tariffs

Associated Press

MADRID (AP) — The leaders of France and Spain said they welcomed a trade truce between the United States and Europe called this week, but demanded action Thursday from their ally across the Atlantic to reduce tariffs and rejected negotiating a new trade agreement with the U.S.

"A good trade dialogue can only be based on a balanced, reciprocal basis, but never under any sort of threat," French President Emmanuel Macron said at a press conference with Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez in Madrid.

Macron added that he wanted to see "clear signals on steel and aluminum that are subject of illegal tariffs in the United States."

The U.S. has imposed tariffs on imports of the metals and threatened to put taxes of 20 to 25 percent on cars, trucks and auto parts imported from the EU, justifying the actions on national-security grounds.

The EU has imposed retaliatory taxes on American-made products.



French President Emmanuel Macron arrives to visit the Pic du Midi in the Pyrenees mountain at La Mongie in Bagneres-de-Bigorre, France, Thursday, July 26, 2018.

Associated Press

But on Wednesday, U.S. President Donald Trump and European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker agreed to engage in talks that would open markets. The EU also agreed to purchase more soybeans from the U.S. and to build more terminals for imported American lique-

fied natural gas.

Sanchez said neither France nor Spain were comfortable with the deal's potential to harm Europe's common agricultural policy and said they would seek clarification from Juncker, the European Union's chief trade negotiator.

Macron said the deal elimi-

nates "useless tension," but also warned that he was against launching negotiations on a vast U.S.-EU trade accord "because the context doesn't allow it."

The French president made his first official visit to Spain on Thursday. He and Sanchez have agreed to pursue a joint agenda on ex-

panding the EU's membership and reaffirmed their shared views on mass migration from northern Africa to Europe.

But both leaders had to field questions about separate scandals that threaten to tarnish their public images. Macron accused journalists of "stirring a storm in a glass" over his former security aide who was seen beating a protester in video footage published by Le Monde last week.

Prosecutors and French lawmakers have opened a judicial investigation of Alexandre Benalla's actions at the May 1 demonstration he attended with riot police he was supposed to be observing. Macron's office has been under attack for not disclosing the incident weeks ago and how Benalla was disciplined before his firing last week.

"Something grave has occurred which was met with an immediate and proportionate response from the Elysee Palace," Macron said in reference to the home of the French president's offices. □



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UN urges rivals in Cyprus to engage with UN on peace talks



UN envoy Jane Holl Lute arrives at the presidential palace for a meeting with Cyprus' president Nikos Anastasiades in the divided capital of Nicosia, Cyprus, Monday, July 23, 2018.

Associated Press

UNITED NATIONS (AP) — The U.N. Security Council unanimously approved a resolution Thursday urging rival parties in Cyprus "to seize the important opportunity" to engage with a new U.N. envoy seeking to determine if the time is right

to resume talks on reunifying the divided Mediterranean island.

Numerous rounds of negotiations over more than four decades have failed and after the most recent talks collapsed last July, Secretary-General Antonio

Guterres encouraged a period of reflection. In early July, Guterres asked U.N. official Jane Holl Lute, a former U.S. Homeland Security deputy secretary, to sound out all sides.

U.N. spokesman Stephane Dujarric said later Thursday that Lute has held one round of talks in Cyprus and would consult with Guterres.

The council focused on efforts to revive negotiations in the resolution which extended the mandate of the U.N. peacekeeping force in Cyprus until Jan. 31, 2019.

Cyprus was divided into a Turkish-speaking north and a Greek-speaking south in 1974 when Turkey invaded after a coup by Cypriots who supported uniting the island with Greece. □



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ARUBA WINE & DINE

Police shut gypsy camp in Rome despite EU ruling

By **SIMONE SOMEKH**
Associated Press

ROME (AP) — Police in Rome on Thursday cleared nearly 400 people, including dozens of children, from a shanty camp inhabited for years by members of the minority Roma community, despite a European Union court ruling halting demolition.

Residents stood outside the camp with mattresses and other belongings piled alongside vehicles, some protesting against the move with chants of "Racists!"

Some residents complained that police used force during the eviction. Police commander Antonio Di Maggio denied the claims.

Mayor Virginia Raggi wrote on Facebook that the shantytown, established in a former campground called Camping River on Rome's northern periphery, was closed for hygiene reasons. Parts of the camp had been without electricity and running water.

She said that the move was meant to provide greater protection to the Roma, especially minors, some of whom do not attend school.

"It is unacceptable to continue to finance places like this that create ghettos, and above all, where the living conditions don't protect the rights of children, women and men," Raggi wrote in a Facebook post. The European Court of Hu-



A woman holds a child after being evicted from the Camping River village which housed a Roma camp, in Rome, Thursday, July 26, 2018.

Associated Press

man Rights on Tuesday asked Italian authorities to suspend action until Friday and outline plans to re-house the community, following an appeal by three

camp residents. But city officials said that they had long been working to relocate residents, and had delayed the planned closing by more than a year.

City spokesman Gennaro Barbieri said only 100 had accepted authorities' offer to move into government reception centers over the last few years, with another 43 joining them on Thursday.

Raggi noted that some who were not Italian citizens had returned to their native Romania in recent months.

While many members of Italy's sizeable Roma community, also known as Gypsies, are of Italian nationality, many living in the camp were from Romania, Kosovo, Bosnia and Serbia. Italian authorities periodically clear out squatter camps like Camping River where many live on the outskirts of big cities. □

UK pauses cooperating with US on trial of 'Beatles' jihadis

By **DANICA KIRKA**
NISHAT AHMED
Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — Britain's Home Office has temporarily suspended cooperating with U.S. authorities on the handover of two British jihadis allegedly linked to the Islamic State group until a judge reviews a decision that would allow the pair to be tried in the United States.

Defense lawyers wrote the government this week after leaked documents showed that British officials were willing to hand over El Shafee Elsheikh and Alexandra Kotey without assurances the men would not be subject to the death penalty if they were convicted in an

American court.

"We have agreed to a short-term pause," the Home Office said in a statement Thursday. "The government remains committed to bringing these people to justice, and we are confident we have acted in full accordance of the law." Elsheikh and Alexandra Kotey are suspected of being part of a notorious cell of British jihadis known for beheadings and barbaric treatment of hostages in Syria.

The cell was nicknamed "The Beatles" because of their British accents. The British leader of the cell, Mohammed Emwazi, who was also known as "Jihadi John," was killed in a 2015

drone strike.

In 2014 and 2015, the group held more than 20 Western hostages in Syria and tortured many of them. It beheaded seven American, British and Japanese journalists and aid workers and a group of Syrian soldiers, boasting of the butchery in grisly videos.

Britain's The Daily Telegraph

newspaper reported Monday that it had seen a letter from Home Secretary Sajid Javid to U.S. Attorney General Jeff Sessions about the two militants, who have been in custody in Kurdish-controlled northeastern Syria since they were captured earlier this year.

The government pause came after lawyers for

Elsheikh demanded a judicial review of the decision to allow the men to be put on trial in the U.S.

Attorneys Gareth Peirce and Anne McMurdie said they wrote the government to outline why the decision was unlawful and "setting out an urgent timetable" for the case to be heard in court. □

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IS attack devastates community in southern Syria



In this photo released by the Syrian official news agency SANA, mourners attend mass funeral of people killed a day earlier by series of suicide bombings launched by Islamic State's fighters in al-Sweida, Syria, Thursday, July 26, 2018.

Associated Press

By SARAH EL DEEB
Associated Press

BEIRUT (AP) — Mourners in southern Syria attended mass funerals Thursday for at least 216 people killed in coordinated attacks by Islamic State fighters on a usually peaceful city and surrounding countryside. In the worst violence to hit the area since the country's conflict began, the militants also reportedly abducted at least 18 people, activists said.

The simultaneous attacks on the city of Sweida and surrounding villages a day earlier evoked the dark days of Islamic State violence that beleaguered Syria and neighboring Iraq during the group's heyday in 2014 and 2015. The abduction of civilians — activists say at least 14 were women — also were reminiscent of the group's tactic of taking hostages and using women as sex slaves. A mass funeral was held in the city of Sweida on Thursday where men gath-

ered in a hall to pay their respects to the dead. The devastated city was covered in black and shops were closed during the day to mourn the mass deaths. Until Wednesday, Sweida, home to a predominantly Druze community, had largely been spared the violence that has hit Syria since 2011.

As Syria's civil war took increasingly sectarian undertones, pitting the largely Sunni opposition against the predominantly Alawite ruling class, the Druze minority stayed largely on the sidelines. Community leaders in Sweida took a firm position against participating in the war, resisting enrolling their sons in the army to avoid revenge attacks. The Druze, followers of an esoteric offshoot of Islam, have kept their own local militias.

The attacks Wednesday rocked the community, sparking criticism of the government for failing to protect the minority group

that has for years been spared the violence.

Diana Semaan, a Syria researcher at the rights group Amnesty International, said there were signs that no government troops or security were present to provide protection for the community when it came under attack. Despite the community's push-back against getting involved in the war, the government has an "obligation" to protect them, Semaan said.

"We call on all sides to prioritize the protection of civilians. This didn't happen (in Sweida)," she said. "No government troops were in site."

The rare attacks in Sweida came amid a government offensive elsewhere in the country's south. Syrian forces are battling an IS-linked group near the frontier with the Israeli-occupied Golan Heights and near the border with Jordan. The group also has a small presence on the eastern edge of Sweida province, and

in the desert in adjacent Homs province.

The militants launched their offensive with a spate of suicide bombing attacks in the city of Sweida in the early hours of Wednesday, including one at a busy vegetable market that left a scene of devastation. The militants also swarmed several villages in the province's northeast, and in some cases, shot residents as they slept, according to activist-operated Facebook page Sweida News Network.

Hassan Omar, a government health official in Sweida province, said Thursday that at least 150 people were wounded in the attacks and that some were in critical condition.

SNN also shared the names of at least 18 people abducted from one village, Shabki, most of them women. Their fate remained unknown and it was not immediately clear if they were missing or abducted. The Britain-based Syrian Ob-

servatory for Human Rights also reported the abduction, saying dozens were taken from their homes but details of the operation remained unclear. The Observatory put the death toll at 246, including 111 members of local militias who took up arms to fight the advancing militants. At least 135 civilians were among the killed, the Observatory said.

SNN said many of the dead were shot in the head as they slept.

The Observatory also reported bodies found killed inside homes.

Since their offensive in June, Syrian President Bashar Assad's forces have retaken territories controlled by the rebels along the Golan Heights frontier and are now fighting militants in the country's southern tip.

On Thursday afternoon, Syrian troops entered the town of Quneitra in the Golan Heights and reached the frontier with the Israeli-occupied part of the region, where the Syrian Central Military Media said they raised the Syrian flag.

The SCMM posted photographs from inside the town, where homes have been left badly damaged since wars with Israel decades ago.

Syrian state TV also reported that troops captured the nearby town of Sahem al-Golan later in the day.

IS has been largely defeated in Syria and Iraq, but still has pockets of territory it controls in eastern and southern Syria.

The extremist group boasted that its "soldiers" killed more than 100 people in Sweida.

In a statement posted on the group's social media channels, it said its militants carried out surprise attacks on government and security centers, sparking clashes with Syrian troops and allied militias. It mentioned nothing about attacking civilians in villages.

The Islamic State group posted no death toll for its own men in Wednesday's fighting. The Observatory said at least 56 militants were killed. □



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Khan moves from cricket star to pious, anti-poverty reformer

By KATHY GANNON
Associated Press

ISLAMABAD (AP) — As former cricket star Imran Khan claimed victory Thursday in Pakistan's parliamentary election, he has promised to fight corruption and help millions of impoverished citizens.

He says he also wants good relations with his neighbors and the United States, but also has leveled criticism against them.

Once a celebrity playboy, Khan now embraces conservative Islamic stands and keeps company with radical clerics who often espouse a philosophy that frightens Pakistan's minorities. He calls for an Islamic welfare state that provides progress and education for the poor.

Khan's stands on some key issues:

ON MILITARY DOMINANCE: Pakistan's powerful military



In this photo provided by the office of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf party, Pakistani politician Imran Khan, delivers his address in Islamabad, Pakistan, Thursday, July 26, 2018.

Associated Press

establishment has directly or indirectly ruled the country for most of its seven decades of existence. Khan

dismissed widespread allegations of manipulation during the election campaign by the military and

sidestepped discussion on its role in civilian affairs, by simply saying the army is Pakistan.

ON THE TREATMENT OF WOMEN

Khan has publicly expressed his admiration for the justice dispensed against women by "jirgas" — or councils of elders. These councils have banned women from voting; given children to old men to marry in order to settle disputes; and ordered a woman to be stripped naked and paraded through a village for a dishonor or crime committed by a male relative. Khan also has attacked Pakistan's political liberals and berated Western feminist ideals, saying it degrades motherhood.

ON THE BLASPHEMY LAW

Khan campaigned openly promising to support and defend Pakistan's blasphemy laws.

Rights groups and minorities say the measures are often used to settle local scores. □



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5 more parties back conservative in Brazil's president race

By MAURICIO SAVARESE

Associated Press

SAO PAULO (AP) — Five allied political parties endorsed the presidential nominee of the bigger right-leaning Brazilian Social Democracy Party on Thursday, giving a boost to the man seen as the establishment candidate in Brazil's fractured political landscape.

The candidate, conservative former Sao Paulo Gov. Geraldo Alckmin, has been struggling to top 10 percent in opinion polls ahead of the October elections. But with the group's endorsement, he will get more free air time on TV and radio during the presidential campaign plus the support of more than 1,000 mayors nationwide. The five parties make up the "Big Center" coalition in Congress, holding 164 of 513 seats in the Chamber of Deputies and 17 of 81 seats in the Senate. Many members of the



Presidential hopeful, former governor of Sao Paulo, Geraldo Alckmin, speaks during the "Mobility Forum ANPTrilhos" in Brasilia, Brazil, Wednesday, July 18, 2018.

five have been caught up in Brazil's sprawling "Car Wash" corruption investigation, which has jailed politicians and business executives across Latin America. Leaders of the coalition

said Alckmin's running mate will come from one of the five parties. His favorite for the role, textile business mogul Josue Gomes, refused it earlier Thursday. Jailed former President Luiz

Inacio Lula da Silva has been leading in the polls, but he is likely to be barred from running and substituted by another member of his left-leaning Workers' Party.

Associated Press

Far-right former military officer Jair Bolsonaro, environmentalist Marina Silva and left-leaning Ciro Gomes also lead Alckmin in the polls.

The Big Center group had earlier negotiated to endorse Gomes, but Alckmin prevailed after convincing leaders of the five parties that his candidacy is viable. Political analyst Alberto Almeida, who has written several books on Brazilian elections, said Alckmin probably can thank unpopular President Michel Temer for the coalition's endorsement.

"It is clear that Temer wants Alckmin to win and carry on with his austerity measures. All those five parties also support Temer in Congress," Almeida said.

Almeida said the endorsement could help Alckmin in competing with Bolsonaro, who polls second now thanks to a hard-line rightist political base. □



Rescue workers search the crash site of a twin-engine Beechcraft Baron in Ayolas, Paraguay, Thursday, July 26, 2018.

Associated Press

Cabinet minister, 3 others die in Paraguay plane crash

Associated Press

ASUNCION, Paraguay (AP)

— Paraguay's agriculture minister and three other people have died in the crash of a small plane.

Civil Aeronautics official Ruben Aguilar says the twin-engine Beechcraft Baron

went down in a marshy area shortly after taking off Wednesday night from the airport in Ayolas, some 235 miles (380 kilometers) south of the capital, Asuncion.

The dead included Agriculture Minister Luis Gneiting, Vice Minister Vicente

Ramirez and the pilot and co-pilot. Aguilar says investigators will begin trying to determine the cause of the crash and the reason by an emergency beacon failed to activate — a factor that apparently slowed rescue efforts. □

Rights group updates death toll in Nicaragua unrest to 448

Associated Press

MANAGUA, Nicaragua

(AP) — A rights group on Thursday raised by nearly 100 to 448 the number of dead from more than three months of political upheaval and protests demanding President Daniel Ortega leave office.

Alvaro Leiva, director of the Nicaraguan Pro-Human Rights Association, said 399 of the dead had been identified and there were photographs, news reports and other evidence to document the other cases. The unrest began in April as protests against proposed



Armed police stand after taking control of the streets in Jinotega, Nicaragua, Tuesday, July 24, 2018.

Associated Press

social security cuts, which were later scrapped. Following a violent crackdown

by security forces and allied armed civilian groups, the demonstrations grew

and broadened in scope to accuse the president of being an authoritarian and include a demand for early elections.

Ortega has denied any responsibility for the killings and accuses those seeking his exit of being coup plotters.

He also rejected the idea of moving up the presidential vote scheduled for 2021, something that domestic critics, the Organization of American States, the United States and other nations have called for.

Leiva said the most deaths, 189, took place in Mana-

gua. That was followed by 55 in Masaya, southeast of the capital.

Attacks attributed to Nicaraguan security forces and armed supporters of Ortega's Sandinista movement have also recently begun squarely targeting the Roman Catholic Church, including church buildings, priests and even the cardinal.

At an event on religious freedom held Thursday at the U.S. State Department, Vice President Mike Pence accused Ortega of "virtually waging war on the Catholic Church." □

LOCAL



Made in Aruba, Unique Gifts from Local Artisans



ORANJESTAD — They are right at the hotels and offer unique, locally manufactured artisan products. Foundation Aruba is organizing an art market that gives you the opportunity to admire and/or purchase some genuine products, all locally produced by local artisans. "This is not your regular souvenir that you may encounter in various Caribbean destinations, this is made in Aruba and only offered here", says

Wendy Op De Weegh, one of the board members of the foundation.

Wendy Op De Weegh, Tia Hurkmans and Gabriella Gonzalez are the three board members of Foundation Aruba, all artisans themselves. Wendy: "I started making my own beads of glass and that triggered Tia and Gaby to join. We were friends and we noticed that we needed a platform to present our art.

We were occasionally organizing events at home, but we were looking for more public." That is how the three came to the idea to find more local artisans and encountered a foundation that was in a kind of non-active state. They decided to take over and that is how it all started. "2013 our first organized event happened at Fort Zoutman in Oranjestad with Christmas time. It was a big success and from that time

on it really took off. More and more artisans were engaged and the government also initiated the national seal for artisan products at that time and provided us with a list of artisans that were registered."

Your Vacation Memory

The aim of the foundation is to engage the artisans that create smaller pieces, locally produced and linked to Aruba. The perfect gift or souvenir. Think of jew-

elry in different materials, art with driftwood, soap and skin care, small paintings and so on. There is the jewelry made of the tail fin of lion fish by Lionfintastic. Lionfish are an invasive species from the Pacific and Indian Ocean, voracious eaters with no known predators. The handmade soap and skin care from olive oil and shea butter by CC Bath & Body is another unique gift as well as the wonderful jewelry made by recycled materials of Miljenou Tromp. Gloria Filiciana creates awesome artisan jewelry from among others genuine Aruban sea glass and what to think of a necklace of driftwood, created by Wise Wood. Turning a discarded material into a unique art craft is what Cemur offers you. But there is much more. You really need to check it out for yourselves as this is your change to bring home a real piece of Aruba. The best vacation memory or genuine gift. The artisans market is on Mondays at Bucuti & Tara Beach Resort between 4.30 and 6.30 PM, at Tuesdays and Thursdays between 6 and 9 PM at the Marriott Resort & Stellaris Casino and at Fridays between 7 and 10 PM at the Renaissance Marketplace in Oranjestad. Check their Facebook Foundation ArUBA for more information. □



Exploring the Mainstreet of San Nicolaas

28 July 2018 | **Must see, do, buy and eat**
Experience San Nicolas

Must see

MOSAIC BENCHES
Only in San Nicolas you can find benches decorated with mosaic.
NEW – The 4 benches in the middle of cosy SANI Market.

MUSEUM OF INDUSTRY
Situating in the iconic "Water Toren", open from 9.00 am - 1.00 pm

MURALS
San Nicolas is embellished with murals.
NEW - The mural "Chameleon at Nicolas Store" on the wall at Wema, which is made by a group of San Nicolas artists.

Beauty & shopping

COSECHA STORE
Situating in the Promenade, open from 9.00 am – 4.00 pm, your address for local and certified arts & crafts.
Address: B v/d Veen Zeppenfeldtstraat 20.

WEMA Home and Hardware Center N.V. | with SPECIAL
Open from 7.00 am – 7.00 pm, with discount products being sold on Wema Parkinglot.
Address: Trompsstraat 3.

Anthony Barbershop | with SPECIAL
Situating in the Promenade, next to Cosecha Store and Creative Center, open from 9.00 am – 6.00 pm, with SPECIAL 15% discount on haircuts till 1.00 pm

Department stores
La Aruba, Alankar and Aruba Store, all open till 6.00 pm

JM Enterprises - Clothing and shoes boutique
Open except on the Saturdays.
Address: Bernardstraat 101, shop #4.

Cafes and restaurants

Charlie's Bar and Restaurant | with SPECIAL
Situating in the main street, open from 9.00 am – 6.00 pm, with SPECIAL dishes and soup on this day.
Address: B v/d Veen Zeppenfeldtstraat 56.

Grill Time | with SPECIAL
BBQ special. Situating next to Wema parkinglot. Open from 11.00 am – 3.00 pm and 5.00 pm – 12.00 am.
Address: Bernardstraat z/h

Mundi Health Cafe
Situating on the ground floor of Nicolas Store, open till 11.00 pm.
Address: B v/d Veen Zeppenfeldtstraat 27.

Topaz Take-away
Situating in the Wema Parkinglot. Your address for bush tea, johnny cake and salt fish. Open except on Saturdays.
Address: Bernardstraat.

Joy's restaurant (buffet style)
Buffet style restaurant, open till 7.00 pm.
Address: Calle capt. Robert Rodger 17

Gallo rojo (corner joint)
Corner joint, open till 11.45 pm.
Address: Bernardstraat.

O'niel Caribbean Kitchen
Situating in the Promenade, open till 8.00 pm.
Address: B v/d Veen Zeppenfeldtstraat 13.

SAN NICOLAAS — Just 19 kilometers southeast from Oranjestad you will discover San Nicolaas, also known as Sunrise City or Chocolate City. A city rich in authentic culture and island charm. San Nicolaas is Aruba's second largest city and was once a bustling company town dominated by the oil industry since the early 1930's.

Over the course of four decades its demographics changed immensely due to a mixed stream of African/Caribbean and South American workers who were attracted from surrounding islands and countries to fill the jobs in the oil refinery between 1920's and 1960's. Till this day traces of the multicultural influences in culinary offerings

and customs, housing and population are clearly visible in San Nicolas - more than anywhere else on the island.

Flow of history

If you are looking for history San Nicolaas has it. Here you will find two jewels of museums. The Museum of Industry and The Community museum all in a short walking distance from each other. The Museum of Industry is situated in the Water Tower in San Nicolas and narrates Aruba's industrial history which began in the 19th century. Here you will get to know The Gold Industry, The Aloe Industry, The Phosphate Industry, The Oil Industry and The Tourism Industry and experience the touching stories of those who were part of

this history. Nicolaas Store built in 1940 and renovated in 2014 is the house of the Community Museum. The collection is remarkable and spans millennia. Ancient fossils stand next to tableaux of an authentically recreated colonial kitchen and bedroom and 19th-century barbershop, just to name a few of the examples of old-time Aruba that have been preserved. A collection of artifacts and other objects of artistic, cultural, historical, or scientific importance can be found here for the purpose of education and enjoyment.

The new San Nicolaas

In the shadow of the refinery, an art capital is quietly beginning to build. This is the new San Nicolaas, a place that is starting to be-

come a magnet for all that is young, cool and hip in Aruba. Indeed, San Nicolas has all of the ingredients of an emerging cultural hub — varied history, interesting architecture, and, perhaps most importantly, an urban layout that makes it walkable. As you walk around, the streets are silent but the walls are loud, filled with bright, colorful murals painted by a collection of artists from around the world. Thanks to the efforts of various art organizations in Aruba, such as Art Rules Aruba and Aruba Art Fair, San Nicolas has had quite the aesthetic makeover with regards to vibrant street art. Each year more and more stunning murals are replacing broken down buildings with colorful art pieces that keep brightening up Sunrise City.

Must See, Do, Buy & Eat

A little bit of everything can be found in the main street. Stores selling shoes, clothing, jewelry you name it. Arts & crafts by Cosecha store & Creative Center, a design store in which you can immerse yourself in discovering genuine and locally made arts and crafts which reflect the diversification of the Aruban craft heritage and the artistic supply of artisans. Don't miss out on trying the exqui-

site food offered by the cafes and restaurants or just enjoy a peaceful walk admiring the murals, mosaic benches and all the history San Nicolaas has to offer.

Experience San Nicolaas

Ready to experience something different on your Saturday outing, consider San Nicolaas. Fundacion Museo Arubano, a non-profit organization that aims to manage, retain and promote Aruba's cultural heritage, will be holding their next event this upcoming Saturday in the city of San Nicolaas.

The event will be from 9AM till 1PM and starts with a Museum Bus tour. The tour will start at the museum Fort Zoutman & Willem III Toren and will continue towards the Museum of Industry and the Community Museum in San Nicolaas. You will have a chance to sit down and relax at Nicolaas Store, and enjoy all the MURALS, and afterward you will be visiting the Sanimarket. Here you will find hand-made local artwork, home articles, local food and so much more. After that we will head back downtown to embrace the Historical Museum. For more info check it out on facebook Fundacion Museo Arubano or Experience San Nicolaas. □



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Loyal and friendly visitors of the Island.

PALM BEACH — Recently, Ms. Darline S. de Cuba had the great pleasure to honor Loyal and friendly visitors of Aruba as Goodwill Ambassadors at their home away from home.

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Mr. James & Mrs. Terlene Todd are residents of Sterling Virginia and have been honored as Goodwill Ambassadors for returning to our island for 25 consecutive years.

Ms. Darline de Cuba of Aruba Tourism Authority together with Mrs. Sandra Miller-Cornett member of Paradise Beach Villas attended the ceremony and handed out some presents to the honorees and thanked them for choosing Aruba as their home away from home for so many years.

Visitors stated that reasons for returning to Aruba for so many years are because of the lovely weather, the people of Aruba, Eagle Beach, the great selection of Restaurants, casinos, and entertainment. □



Tonight Claudia Roa Accompanied By Aruba Symphony Orchestra At Cas Di Cultura



ORANJESTAD — At the age of 14 Claudia Roa came from Temuco, Chile to participate in the Festival of 2016. Taking Master's Classes from the Venezuelan pianist Edith Peña who that year was nominated for a Grammy award, Claudia managed to win the Audience's Prize. Last year, Claudia returned to Aruba and again took classes from Mrs. Peña. She impressed the jury with her rendition of Mendelssohn and Chopin and was declared winner of the students' 2017 competition.

Claudia also inspired the then Minister of Culture to sign an MOU with the Aruba School of Music 'Rufo Weaver' and the Nuevo Mundo Foundation, organizers of the Aruba Symphony Festival, with the objectives of

A colorful poster for Claudia Roa's piano concert. The text reads: "CLAUDIA ROA 'CONCIERTO DE PIANO'". Below this, it lists composers: "Frédéric Chopin - Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart - Ludwig van Beethoven - Sergei Rachmaninoff - Claude Debussy - Alfonso Lapeña - Alfonso Lora - Felix Mendelssohn". The date and time are "jueves 15 diciembre 20:00 horas". The venue is "Aula Magna UFRO". There is also a "5 AÑOS 1981-2016 TRADICIÓN LIDERAZGO EXCELENCIA" logo. At the bottom, it lists sponsors: "Comité de Invitaciones Universidad de La Frontera, BIBLIOTECA CENTRAL, EXTENSIÓN FAC. DE MEDICINA, OFICINA DE INFORMACIONES, VINCULACIÓN CON EL MEDIO, PRAT 321".

creating a Youth Symphony Orchestra for Aruba.

Back in Temuco, Claudia practiced a lot and gave various solo concerts and a couple of concerts accompanied by a full orchestra in preparation for the performance tonight in the Cas di Cultura at 8 PM. Admission is free, but there will be a Donation Box where you can show your appreciation for the musicians and the work of the volunteers of the Aruba Symphony Festival who will continue to try to bring world class music to Aruba.

Don't pass up this opportunity to watch Claudia Roa play Mozart's Concerto No. 20 D minor K466. □

An amazing island



PALM BEACH — First time in Aruba, Adriana Orteaga and Emily Ortiz are bowled over. The gorgeous sales assistant and student from New Jersey are having an amazing experience while celebrating a birthday here.

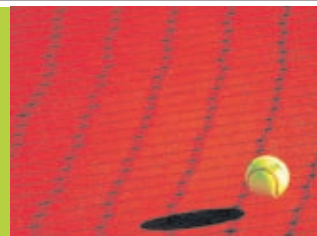
We caught up with Adriana and Emily at Dragonfly Restaurant in the Arawak Garden. "We found this place walking by and it looked very inviting", said Adriana and Emily.

After dinner, they were really enthusiastic: "The restaurant has amazing customer service, delicious food and great ambience". We'll be coming back. Our friends back home will be hearing about our experience here".

We love to hear comments like these - thank you so much and congratulations on your birthday, of course. We hope to see you soon again on Aruba, Adriana and Emily! □



SPORTS



MMA star Conor McGregor pleads guilty in melee case

By MICHAEL R. SISAK
Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — This time, Conor McGregor didn't put up a fight. The mixed martial arts star pleaded guilty on Thursday to disorderly conduct and will perform five days of community service to resolve charges stemming from a backstage melee at a New York City arena in which he was caught on camera hurling a hand truck at a bus full of fighters. McGregor will also be evaluated for an anger management program and barred from contact with fighters injured in the mayhem after a news conference for the UFC 223 event at Brooklyn's Barclays Center in April.

There are no restrictions on McGregor's travel. If he stays out of trouble for a year, his record will be wiped clean. If he violates the terms of his plea deal, he could be jailed for up to 15 days. Prosecutors said he's already paid to fix the bus. "I just want to say I'm thankful to the DA and the judge for allowing me to move forward," McGregor said outside a Brooklyn courthouse. "I want to say to my friends, my family, my fans, thank you for the support." The 30-year-old Irish brawler, who last month said he regretted his actions, then rushed to a waiting SUV with his entourage, separated by bike-rack barricades from dozens of photographers and reporters and a self-professed superfan.

Continued on Page 22

FALLEN STAR



Blackmon's HR in 9th gives Rockies 3-2 win over Astros

Houston Astros third baseman J.D. Davis ends up over the dugout railing after catching a pop foul off the bat of Colorado Rockies' Nolan Arenado during the seventh inning of a baseball game Wednesday, July 25, 2018, in Denver.

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'It means everything': DeRozan eager to work with Popovich

By TIM REYNOLDS

AP Basketball Writer

LAS VEGAS (AP) — Kyle Lowry had the ball in the right corner. He was well-defended and not able to shoot or drive, so he fired a crosscourt diagonal pass to DeMar DeRozan. For years, that was a fine idea.

This time, it became a turnover. They were on different teams during this particular scrimmage, which seems fitting.

USA Basketball's first minicamp of this Olympic cycle started Thursday in Las Vegas, with DeRozan and Lowry — longtime teammates in Toronto — both wearing the same uniform again. DeRozan is now with the San Antonio Spurs and set to be coached by Gregg Popovich, who just happened to be running his first national team practice Thursday.

DeRozan has made no secret: He wasn't happy getting traded out of Toronto. But if there's a consolation prize to be had, it's that he now gets Popovich.

"It means everything," DeRozan said. "I could have ended up in the middle of nowhere with Joe Blow. I ended up in a great place that wanted me that strives for greatness. You can't ask for nothing better than that."

DeRozan was sent to the Spurs on July 18, along with center Jakob Poeltl and a



United States men's national team basketball coach Gregg Popovich left, speaks with Eric Gordon (46) and DeMar DeRozan during a training camp for USA basketball, Thursday, July 26, 2018, in Las Vegas.

protected 2019 first round pick, for Kawhi Leonard and wing Danny Green. Leonard was one of the 35 players invited to attend this minicamp; he was one of roughly a dozen who didn't show, a list that also includes LeBron James, Stephen Curry and Klay Thompson.

Popovich didn't seem bothered that there were no-shows.

"People have lives," Popovich said. "We had a good number of people here and the people who were

invited that aren't here have reasons, whether it's injury or personal things going on in their lives. And we understand that."

This two-day camp that ends Friday is little more than a get-to-know-you-better event for the players and Popovich. There are no games to play, and technically there aren't even future tournaments to prepare for — under the new qualifying rules, the U.S. isn't yet assured of having a spot in either the 2019 FIBA World Cup in China or

Associated Press
the 2020 Tokyo Olympics.

The task of making sure the Americans get to China next year has fallen to G League players, who are being coached by Jeff Van Gundy and went 5-1 in the first round of qualifying. The second round of qualifying starts in September.

Popovich is taking over the national team reins from Mike Krzyzewski, the Duke coach who led the U.S. to Olympic gold in 2008, 2012 and 2016. Krzyzewski was in the gym to watch Thursday. "He's been great," Popov-

ich said. "I would be remiss if I didn't bug him to death, ask him millions of questions and try to learn from him."

DeRozan got some 1-on-1 interaction with his new coach toward the end of practice. Popovich chatted with him for a couple of minutes, and then Houston guard Eric Gordon joined in and the three of them went over some post strategy for guards.

It was consistent with the theme of the day for Popovich, who bounced around conversations all day long — harassing Russell Westbrook during a free throw, chatting with James Harden after one drill, then moving on for a word with Kevin Durant and finally heading over to where Kevin Love was sitting and feigning exasperation as they spoke.

"All these guys have a different story, right? Just like all of you," Popovich said.

"We all have families or kids or situations in life. It's fun to find out who they really are over and above basketball players. It helps me coach them. It makes them feel a bigger part of the program. And they know we're genuinely interested in them off the court."

But as far as whether Popovich got a little something extra out of working with DeRozan, that was kept secret. Popovich wanted to keep his answers specific to USA Basketball, not the Spurs. □



New York Red Bulls forward Bradley Wright-Phillips, center, celebrates his goal during the first half of the team's MLS soccer match against D.C. United, Wednesday, July 25, 2018, in Washington.

By The Associated Press
WASHINGTON (AP) — Bradley Wright-Phillips became

Associated Press
the fastest to score 100 MLS goals and the New York Red Bulls beat Atlan-

Red Bulls' Bradley Wright-Phillips fastest to 100 MLS goals

tic Cup rival D.C. United 1-0 on Wednesday night in a game delayed about 90 minutes due to lightning.

Wright-Phillips scored his 14th goal of the season in the second minute. He ran past the defense for a long through ball and rolled it through the legs of a defender and past goalkeeper David Ousted.

Wright-Phillips celebrated by taking off his red No. 99 jersey to unveil a custom No. 100 white jersey. He needed just 159 games to

become the 11th player to reach the century mark.

UNION 3, DYNAMO 1
HOUSTON (AP) — Cory Burke broke a tie in the 70th minute to help Philadelphia beat Houston.

Alejandro Bedoya tied it at 1 for Philadelphia (8-10-3) in the 34th minute, and Fabrice-Jean Picault added a penalty-kick goal in second-half stoppage time.

Houston's Mauro Manotas opened the scoring in the 10th minute with his career-

high 11th goal. The Dynamo (7-7-6) lost for the first time in five games.

SOUNDERS 1, EARTHQUAKES 0

SAN JOSE, Calif. (AP) — Raul Ruidiaz scored his first MLS goal in his first league start to help Seattle beat last-place San Jose.

Ruidiaz chested down a pass from Cristian Roldan near the penalty area on a breakaway and one-touched a shot inside the far post in the 62nd minute. □

Versatile reliever Romo helps Rays hold off Yanks, 3-2

By The Associated Press
ST. PETERSBURG, Fla. (AP) — Sergio Romo relieved in the eighth inning, shifted to third base when Jonny Venters replaced him in the ninth, then struck out Brett Gardner to end the game with two on and give the Tampa Bay Rays a 3-2 win over the New York Yankees on Wednesday.

Scheduled Rays starter Nathan Eovaldi was traded to AL East-leading Boston about two hours before game time, and six pitchers combined on a seven-hitter.

New York has lost just two series since May, and both are against the Rays. Tampa Bay swept three games in late June, took two of three this week and has won six of its past seven against the Yankees. New York, 14-14 over its past 28 games, acquired reliever Zach Britton from Baltimore late Tuesday but said he will not report until Thursday's homestand opener against Kansas City.

Neil Walker hit a sacrifice fly in the second inning, but the Rays took a 3-1 lead in the sixth when Kevin Kiermaier hit a two-run homer off Luis Cessa (1-2) and C.J. Cron added a solo drive against Jonathan Holder. Diego Castillo (2-1), the second Rays reliever, worked two scoreless innings.

INDIANS 4, PIRATES 0

CLEVELAND (AP) — Trevor Bauer struck out 10 over seven innings, Brad Hand got his first save for Cleveland and the Indians stopped Pittsburgh's winning streak at 11.

Edwin Encarnacion hit a two-run single in the third inning, and Yonder Alonso hit a two-run homer in the eighth.

Pittsburgh was seeking its first 12-game winning streak since 1965 but only advanced one runner past second base as Bauer, Adam Cimber and Hand combined for a three-hitter. Bauer (9-6) allowed Adam Frazier's leadoff double in the fourth and Jordy Mercer's leadoff single in

the eighth. He reached double figures in strikeouts for the ninth time this year and walked two, improving to 3-0 with an MLB-low 0.33 ERA in four interleague starts this season.

Jameson Taillon (7-8) gave up two runs and seven hits over seven innings in his first start against the Indians.

ANGELS 11, WHITE SOX 3

ANAHEIM, Calif. (AP) — Mike Trout, Albert Pujols and Shohei Ohtani all homered in the same game for the first time as Los Angeles routed Chicago.

Pujols passed Ken Griffey Jr. for sixth place on the career list with his 631st home run. Trout connected twice and drove in four runs. Ohtani hit a two-run shot projected at 446 feet.

Tyler Skaggs (8-6) tied a career high with nine strikeouts in six overpowering innings. He whiffed his first five batters — the previous Angels pitcher to accomplish that was Jim Abbott at Oakland in September 1995.

Trout had his 13th career multihomer game. He hit a solo shot in the first inning and a three-run drive in the sixth to give him 28 homers this season. The two-time MVP went 3 for 4 and scored three runs.

Skaggs retired the first 10 batters he faced, seven by strikeout. He allowed two runs, one earned, and four hits.

James Shields (4-12) gave up three homers and six runs in four innings.

ATHLETICS 6, RANGERS 5

ARLINGTON, Texas (AP) — Khris Davis homered two more times in Texas, including a two-run shot in the ninth inning as Oakland rallied again to beat the Rangers.

Davis hit a three-run drive in the seventh to get the Athletics to 5-4. He went the opposite way in the ninth off Jose Leclerc (2-3) for his 27th homer of the season.

Davis has gone deep in six consecutive games against Texas. He has 25 homers and 57 RBIs in 49 career games versus the Rangers — 15 homers and

31 RBIs in 26 road games.

The Rangers led 5-1 going into the seventh, one night after being ahead 10-2 in the seventh and losing 13-10 when Davis hit a three-run homer in the 10th.

Oakland has won 26 of 33 overall. The A's have won 10 of their last 11 series, with a split in the other.

Lou Trivino (8-1) worked a scoreless eighth. Blake Treinen struck out the side in the ninth for his 26th save. Robinson Chirinos hit a three-run homer for Texas, and Adrian Beltre passed Dave Winfield for 16th on the career total bases list with an RBI single.

MARINERS 3, GIANTS 2

SEATTLE (AP) — Jean Segura chopped the first pitch from Sam Dyson into center field to score Guillermo Heredia with the go-ahead run in the eighth inning, and Seattle Mariners won yet another one-run game by beating San Francisco. Seattle came up with just enough offense to split the two-game interleague



Tampa Bay Rays relief pitcher Sergio Romo reacts after striking out New York Yankees' Brett Gardner in the ninth inning to save a 3-2 Rays win in a baseball game Wednesday, July 25, 2018, in St. Petersburg, Fla.

Associated Press

series, and it was one of their All-Stars who came through. Heredia walked to lead off the eighth inning against Tony Watson (3-4) and advanced to second on Dee Gordon's bunt. Gordon was initially called safe but was out on review. Dyson, who shut down the Mariners a night earlier, took over and was greeted

by Segura's chopper up the middle, and Heredia beat the throw home from Steven Duggar.

Alex Colome (3-5) pitched the eighth inning, and Edwin Diaz struck out the side in the ninth for his league-best 38th save in 41 chances. Seattle improved to 27-12 in one-run games this season. □

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Kingery, Santana lead Phillies past Dodgers 7-3; Utley feted

By The Associated Press

PHILADELPHIA (AP) — Scott Kingery homered and Carlos Santana hit a three-run triple in Philadelphia's five-run fifth inning, leading the Phillies over Los Angeles.

Rhys Hoskins also went deep for the Phillies, who increased their lead in the NL East to 1½ games over the idle Atlanta Braves.

Jake Arrieta (8-6) allowed two earned runs and five hits in six innings for the victory.

Max Muncy homered and Joc Pederson and Alex Verdugo had a pair of hits for Los Angeles. Walker Buehler (4-3) allowed five runs and five hits in 4 2/3 innings. The game started less than 11½ hours after the final out of the Phillies' 7-4, 16-inning win that started Tuesday night and lasted 5 hours, 55 minutes, ending at 1:14 a.m. Wednesday.

Seranthony Dominguez recorded the final four outs for his 10th save in 11 chances.

NATIONALS 7, BREWERS 3

MILWAUKEE (AP) — Bryce Harper tied for the NL lead with his 25th home run, Tanner Roark pitched eight scoreless innings to end a seven-start winless streak and Washington beat Milwaukee.

Harper hit a three-run homer in the fifth against Freddy Peralta (4-2) for a 6-0 lead, matching Milwaukee's Jesus Aguilar, Colorado's Nolan Arenado and St. Louis' Matt Carpenter for the NL



Philadelphia Phillies' Scott Kingery, right, rounds the bases after hitting a home run off Los Angeles Dodgers starting pitcher Walker Buehler, left, during the fifth inning of a baseball game, Wednesday, July 25, 2018, in Philadelphia.

Associated Press

home run lead.

Roark (4-12), the NL leader in losses, allowed three hits, struck out a season-high 11 and walked one, helping the Nationals avoided being swept in the three-game series. He had been 0-6 in seven starts since beating Tampa Bay on June 6.

CUBS 2, DIAMONDBACKS 1

CHICAGO (AP) — Jon Lester bounced back from his worst start of the season with six strong innings and the Cubs scored the go-ahead run in the eighth on Arizona shortstop Nick Ahmed's throwing error and Chicago edged Arizona.

Chicago mounted the winning rally against Arizona reliever T.J. McFarland (2-2) without getting a ball out of the infield. Pinch-hitter Javier Baez led off the eighth by squibbing a single toward the mound. McFarland threw wide of first, and Baez advanced to second. After pitcher Tyler Chatwood ran for Baez, who didn't start because of a sore left knee, and Ian Happ walked, pinch-hitter Jason Heyward bounced to second baseman Ketel Marte. Marte flipped to Ahmed for a force at second, but Ahmed's throw to first sailed over Paul Goldschmidt as he tried to complete a double play.

Reliever Carl Edwards Jr. (3-1) pitched a hitless seventh and eighth. Pedro Strop tossed a scoreless ninth for his fourth save in seven chances as NL Central leading Chicago bounced back after losses to Arizona in the first two games of the four-game series.

ROCKIES 3, ASTROS 2

DENVER (AP) — Charlie Blackmon hit a solo home run with one out in the bottom of the ninth inning and Colorado held the World Series champions to one hit at Coors Field.

Jon Gray pitched seven sharp innings and Carlos Gonzalez also homered for the Rockies.

Blackmon drove a 3-1 pitch from Collin McHugh (5-1) into the Houston bullpen for his 20th home run of the season and second career game-ending hit. It was a dramatic finish to a wild game in which the Astros had a triple wiped out after a replay review because of fan interference, and the Rockies scored the tying

run on a foul popup.

AL MVP Jose Altuve ended up with Houston's only hit — an RBI double — before leaving with discomfort in his right knee.

Wade Davis (1-3) worked a scoreless inning for the win.

REDS 7, CARDINALS 3

CINCINNATI (AP) — Eugenio Suarez homered for the third straight game, Tucker Barnhart added a two-run shot and Cincinnati powered to a win over St. Louis. Adam Duvall also homered for the Reds. Sal Romano (6-8) allowed two runs and seven hits in six innings to give the Reds consecutive series wins over St. Louis for the first time since 2011.

Paul DeJong and Yadier Molina hit solo homers for the Cardinals, who went 3-5 on their eight-game road trip. DeJong homered in the third inning and Molina hit his 14th of the season in the seventh inning.

Jack Flaherty (4-5) allowed three runs, four hits, two walks with eight strikeouts in five innings.

METS 6, PADRES 4

NEW YORK (AP) — Rookie Corey Oswalt beat his hometown Padres for his first major league win, pitching three-hit ball over five innings and New York beat San Diego for its first series win in two months.

A 24-year-old right-hander who made his big league debut in April, Oswalt took the mound hours after the Mets announced slugging outfielder Yoenis Cespedes will have operations to remove calcifications in both of his heels, surgeries that are expected to have a recovery time of at least 8-to-10 months.

Oswalt (1-2) made his fifth big league start and sixth appearance. He allowed two runs and two walks while striking out four, leaving after 62 pitches.

Tim Peterson got four outs, Robert Gsellman finished the seventh and Anthony Swarzak pitched two innings for his fourth big league save, his second this year.

Clayton Richard (7-10) allowed six runs, five hits and two walks in five-plus innings. □

Rockies acquire reliever Seunghwan Oh from Blue Jays

DENVER (AP) — The Colorado Rockies added another reliever by acquiring right-hander Seunghwan Oh from Toronto for minor league prospects.

Oh was 4-3 with a 2.68 ERA in 48 appearances for the Blue Jays this season. The 36-year-old South Korean signed a \$2 million, one-year contract in the offseason after two seasons with the St. Louis Cardinals.

It's unclear where Oh will fit into Colorado's bullpen.

The Rockies have Wade Davis as their closer and Adam Ottavino as an eighth-inning specialist.

The Rockies revamped their bullpen last winter, spending more than \$100 million for Davis, right-hander Bryan Shaw and lefty Jake McGee.

In the deal announced Thursday, Toronto picked up minor league infielder Chad Spanberger, outfielder Forrest Wall and a player to be named. □

Jerry Jones: Cowboys can't stay in locker room for anthem

By SCHUYLER DIXON

AP Pro Football Writer

OXNARD, Calif. (AP) —

Dallas Cowboys owner Jerry Jones doubled down Wednesday on insisting that his players stand for the national anthem, declaring that he wouldn't support anyone who chose to stay in the locker room. Speaking at his annual news conference to open training camp in California, the outspoken billionaire became the first owner to say publicly that his players would not be allowed to stay off the field during the anthem.

"No," Jones said when asked if he would support players staying in the locker room. "Our policy is that you stand at the anthem, toe on the line."

Last week, the NFL and the players' union agreed to suspend the rule approved by owners this spring that gave players the option of staying in the locker room while allowing teams to discipline players who took a knee or sat during the anthem.

The decision to begin negotiating on the issue came hours after The Associated Press reported that Miami Dolphins players who protested during the anthem could be suspended for up to four games under team policy.

Last season, Jones was the first owner to declare that



Dallas Cowboys owner Jerry Jones takes questions from the press after the "state of the team" press conference at the start of the team's NFL training camp, Wednesday, July 25, 2018, in Oxnard, Calif.

he would bench a player for protesting during the anthem. Two of his players — defensive linemen David Irving and Damontre Moore — raised their fists briefly as "The Star Spangled Banner" ended but weren't disciplined.

"I obviously wouldn't dare speak for any of the other owners, much less in general about 31 other owners," Jones said.

"As far as the Dallas Cowboys are concerned, you know where I stand. Our team knows where I stand on the issue."

The issue erupted in 2016

when then-San Francisco 49ers quarterback Colin Kaepernick began protesting police brutality, social injustice and racial inequality by kneeling during the national anthem. The demonstration spread to other players and teams.

The NFL started requiring players to be on the field for the anthem in 2009, the year it signed a marketing deal with the military. Jones had already owned the Cowboys for 20 years when players moved from the locker room to the field for the anthem.

Jones said he understood

the point of view of players who say they aren't protesting the flag or the military.

"This is a case where we need to in my mind check that and be real clear that it is, the priority is about the flag, and be real clear about that," Jones said. "Sometimes it's best to just be real clear and succinct so that nobody misunderstands. I think that's our case."

Executive vice president Stephen Jones said the Cowboys don't have an anthem issue because his father has made his stance

clear from the beginning.

"I do understand when you see the back and forth," Stephen Jones said. "But we've been consistent and we've never moved. Jerry's never changed his stance once. I think he feels strongly about it."

The younger Jones didn't want to speak for the players when asked if Jerry Jones' strong message is the reason none of his players have defied him.

"I was always brought up when you work for somebody and they're the boss, you play by their rules," Stephen Jones said.

Jones, who drew praise from President Donald Trump when he said last year that he would bench players, said Trump's continuing involvement in the anthem issue is "problematic" for the league.

Trump weighed in again after news of the Dolphins' policy broke, tweeting "The \$40,000,000 Commissioner must now make a stand," a reference to Roger Goodell.

"His interest in what we're doing is problematic from my chair and I would say, in general, in the owner's chairs," Jerry Jones said. "And unprecedented if you really think about it. But like the very game itself, that's the way it is and we'll deal with it. But, yes, everybody would like for it to go away." □

Patriots sport new-look defense after Super Bowl loss

FOXBOROUGH, Mass. (AP) —

The Patriots are sporting a new look on defense and an attitude of leaving behind their lack of defense in the Super Bowl.

Former defensive coordinator Matt Patricia is now head coach in Detroit. Longtime assistant Brian Flores is running the defense in New England without the formal title of coordinator. Several players have shuffled on and off the roster. Starting cornerback Malcolm Butler signed with Tennessee in free agency

after being mysteriously benched for most of the Super Bowl, but key additions include lineman Danny Shelton, pass rusher Adrian Clayborn and cornerback Jason McCourty joining his twin brother Devin in the backfield. Linebacker Dont'a Hightower says the players are moving past the Super Bowl loss to the Philadelphia Eagles, a game in which the Patriots defense allowed 613 yards. "I don't think any of those guys are going to let that hold over their heads.

I'm sure they're focused on this year. That Super Bowl last year is gone, it's over with," Hightower said. "We're focusing on training camp." Safety Duron Harmon says all his teammates can do now is buckle down on their assignments and string good days together. "If you're looking at the tunnel you can't even see the light right now," said Harmon, who changed his number to 21 as he gave the No. 30 jersey to Jason McCourty, who played for the Browns last season.



New England Patriots linebacker Dont'a Hightower steps off the field following NFL football practice, Thursday, July 26, 2018, in Foxborough, Mass.

Associated Press

Players say Flores has brought in a different terminology and attitude.

"I know how he's going to drive the team and I ap-

preciate it," Harmon said. "I like his intensity, I love his attitude and I just know it's going to help me become a better football player." □

Alexander making journey back from painkiller addict to ring

By **BARRY WILNER**
AP Sports Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Devon Alexander has gone from world champion to painkiller addict to boxer on the comeback trail. He believes the battles he's waged to get back into the ring will benefit him as he chases another title. Alexander held two world championships by the time he was 23 years old. But after defeating Marcos Maidana in early 2012, Alexander underwent surgery to remove a blood clot from his nose.

He was prescribed Tramadol, a powerful opiate painkiller, to help in his recovery. Instead, the drug turned Alexander into an addict.

"Every doctor prescribes pain medication, and this was my first time taking anything, any medicine, and I don't drink or smoke," Alexander said as he prepared for an Aug. 4 welterweight eliminator with another former champion, Andre Berto, at Nassau Coliseum. "A couple weeks after surgery I found myself taking the medicine when I didn't need to, and it gradually got worse. I was taking it again and again."

"Before you knew it, I was skipping the gym. After a year and a half of it — I am



In this Dec. 13, 2014, file photo, Devon Alexander, right, punches Amir Khan during their welterweight boxing match in Las Vegas.

a private person, anyone in boxing will tell you I am — it was very difficult to tell anyone." "Everyone looked at me as there is no way Devon would do that. But I had done it," he said. "It turned my life upside down."

Alexander had one loss against 23 victories after beating Maidana; the loss was to Timothy Bradley Jr., for the WBC super lightweight crown. During his addiction, he actually fought six times, losing three. Two of the defeats

came against Shawn Porter and Amir Khan, among the best welterweights around at the time.

Alexander knew in late 2015 he couldn't think about getting back into the ring until he straightened out his life. So he took off more than two years while kicking his addiction.

"I am a positive person, a happy person, so I never thought that I wouldn't fight (again)," the 31-year-old Alexander said. "I made my mistake and

took the necessary steps to get help. I had my family around, my coach around, my mom around to do the right thing. I always kept up my pride."

But did he keep up his skills? Putting the gloves back on and hitting the heavy bag or sparring were important steps. Could he still handle the rigors of the ring? Cunningham had few doubts that Alexander would return strongly.

"I think a big part of it was he saw he was about to

lose the things he worked so hard to achieve," said Cunningham, who has worked with Alexander since the fighter was 7. "And it was part of the focus on the process of rehab, and he had that (boxing) to look forward to."

His first fight after the layoff was last November against veteran Walter Castillo. Alexander won a unanimous decision.

"It felt like I was home, like I was back to myself," he said. "Just needed a few rounds to get warmed up and my feet under me. I was just elated I was able to be back and beat it, to get in the ring and show other people they can do it. It is now about more than me — I got a purpose now."

Then came another tough, seasoned opponent, Victor Ortiz, in February, and they fought to a draw. Alexander recognizes he is not back to previous form, but he is progressing.

Berto, who has lost five of his last nine after beginning his pro career with 27 straight wins, should provide a good test. Alexander wants the fight on Fox TV to be the next step toward a shot at one of the champions in the stacked welterweight division. □

Conor McGregor

Continued from Page 17

"You're the champ Conor!" Robbie Fox yelled, an Irish flag draped around his neck. "They won't do anything to you Conor, you're the champ!"

McGregor, clad in a tight, blue pinstripe suit, was joined in court by his 25-year-old friend, fellow fighter, Irish citizen and co-defendant Cian Cowley, who was sentenced to three days of community service and anger management.

Prosecutors said the sentence will allow McGregor to "reflect on his conduct and give back to society." The charges to which he and Cowley pleaded guilty

are technically violations, not criminal offenses.

McGregor, once the UFC's simultaneous 145- and 155-pound champion, hasn't fought since the fracas.

The UFC stripped him of its 155-pound championship belt in April because he had not fought in 17 months. During that time, McGregor turned to boxing and secured a guaranteed \$30 million payday despite losing a highly anticipated bout last year to Floyd Mayweather Jr.

The UFC declined to comment Thursday on the outcome of McGregor's case. Last week, McGregor attended the World Cup final in Moscow as a guest of



Mixed martial arts fighter Conor McGregor, center, appears in court, Thursday, July 26, 2018, in New York.

Russian President Vladimir Putin and posed with him in a photo posted on Instagram. In the caption, McGregor called Putin "one of the greatest leaders of our time."

The day before, on Mc-

Gregor's 30th birthday, his girlfriend revealed on Instagram that she was pregnant with their second child.

McGregor, widely known for his fight-related antics, was seen on camera at-

tacking the bus in a Barclays Center loading dock after a press event ahead of UFC 223, which featured the sport's biggest card of the year.

He and an entourage that UFC president Dana White described as "20 hoodlums that flew in from Ireland" crashed the event allegedly looking for retaliation against main event fighter Khabib Nurmagomedov, who had been in an altercation with McGregor's friend Artem Lobov.

Video showed McGregor tossing trash cans and being blocked from throwing a barricade before he launched the hand truck. Fighters Michael Chiesa and Ray Borg were hurt by shattered glass, forcing them from their bouts. □

Thomas looks to cement Tour lead in final mountain leg

By ANDREW DAMPF

PAU, France (AP) — Arnaud Demare was rewarded Thursday for hauling his muscular frame over the Alps and through the Pyrenees.

Geraint Thomas, meanwhile, is preparing to cement his hold on the yellow jersey in Friday's final mountain test of the Tour de France.

After many of his competitors were unable to get through the mountains, Demare took advantage by dominating a mass sprint in Stage 18.

It marked the first victory by a French team, Groupama-FDJ, in this year's race. Sprinters Fernando Gaviria of Colombia and Dylan Groenewegen — who had each won two stages in this Tour — called it quits during Stage 12 to Alpe d'Huez. That came a day after Mark Cavendish and Marcel Kittel, who have a combined 44 Tour stage wins between them, failed to make the time cut on another mountain leg.

Demare said he was motivated by an accusation on social media from Andre Greipel, a top German sprinter, who alleged that Demare held on to his team car on the way up the grueling Col du Portet in Stage 17.

Demare finished Wednesday's stage second to last but managed to avoid the

time cut as thousands of French spectators cheered him on.

Greipel, who also quit in Stage 12, later apologized on Twitter, saying he had relied on "incorrect" information.

"It hurt me enormously," Demare said. "It's a shame that people cast doubts over my performance and my hard work. ... I thought a lot about (Greipel) today. It's not in my mindset or my philosophy to (cheat). I worked hard in the mountains before the Tour and, as a result, I made it through mountain stages when most of the sprinters did not."

Demare, who failed to make the cut on a climb in the Alps last year, had time to celebrate as he crossed the line with his arms wide open ahead of fellow Frenchman Christophe Laporte.

Alexander Kristoff of Norway crossed third in the same time.

After two grueling days in the Pyrenees, Thomas was able to enjoy his seventh day in the yellow jersey during the less challenging 171-kilometer (106-mile) leg from Trie-Sur-Baise to Pau, which featured only two minor climbs and a flat finish.

Thomas remained 1 minute, 59 seconds ahead of Tom Dumoulin with the Welshman's Sky teammate and



France's Arnaud Demare, left, celebrates as he crosses the finish line to win the eighteenth stage of the Tour de France cycling race over 171 kilometers (106.3 miles) with start in Trie-sur-Baise and finish in Pau, France, Thursday, July 26, 2018. France's Christophe Laporte finished second.

Associated Press

four-time champion Chris Froome third, 2:31 behind. Only two challenging stages remain — a lengthy leg through the Pyrenees on Friday including three major climbs, then a technical individual time trial on Saturday — before the mostly ceremonial finish on the Champs-Elysees in Paris on Sunday.

Stage 19 starts in the pilgrimage town of Lourdes and takes the peloton over legendary climbs like the Col du Tourmalet and Col d'Aubisque.

"We're expecting the worst, hoping for the best. ... It's the last mountain stage and I think guys will try to take every opportunity they can," Thomas said. "But we've been riding real well

the whole race, so hopefully we can keep that going for one more day."

After Froome cracked on the Col du Portet, all of Sky's strategy is aimed at getting Thomas to Paris in yellow — meaning Froome may have to help.

"Hopefully we won't have to use Froomey. Hopefully we'll have strength in numbers and he'll be able to just follow as well," Thomas said. "But obviously having Froomey at my disposal, so to speak, is just phenomenal."

Perhaps a bigger worry for Thomas and Froome concerns the unruly fans who have consistently affected this Tour by spitting at riders — or even reaching out to grab them.

One fan who reached over the barriers nearly took Thomas down on Wednesday.

"I thought it was maybe an accident, just maybe an overly exuberant fan," Thomas said. "But when I got back to the hotel and was showed the pictures it was obviously something else. It's not nice. It's not what you want."

On a warm day in southern France, Stage 18 took riders through the vineyards of Madiran to the city of Pau, the birthplace of 16th-century King Henri IV. It was the 70th time that the Tour passed through Pau, which first hosted the race in 1930. Five riders — Guillaume Van Keirsbulck (Wanty-Groupe Gobert), Mathew Hayman (Mitchelton-Scott), Luke Durbridge (Mitchelton-Scott), Niki Terpstra (Quick-Step Floors) and Thomas Boudat (Direct Energie) — were involved in an early breakaway. The sprinters' teams never let them get much more than two minutes ahead, and they were caught with 16.5 kilometers to go.

Otherwise, it was a very calm stage except for a minor crash involving Stage 17 winner Nairo Quintana and British rider Adam Yates midway through the route. Both riders got back on their bikes and continued without apparent problems. □

Ledecky cruises to easy win in 800 free at U.S. Nationals

By BETH HARRIS

IRVINE, Calif. (AP) — Katie Ledecky cruised to a nearly 11-second victory in the 800-meter freestyle Wednesday on the opening night of the U.S. national championships.

Ledecky was under her own world-record pace through the first 300 meters before dropping off and finishing in 8 minutes, 11.98 seconds on Wednesday night. She failed to crack the top 10 performances in the event, which all belong to her.

Leah Smith chased Ledecky all the way and touched second in 8:22.79.

Ledecky earned the 14th national title of her career and a spot in the event at next month's Pan Pacific championships in Tokyo, site of the 2020 Olympics.

"It didn't feel super sharp, but it always takes me a little time to get into these meets," Ledecky said. "I know people are chasing me and that's motivating." Defending world and Olympic champion Simone Manuel won the 100 freestyle in 52.54 seconds, setting a U.S. Open record. Mallory Comerford, fourth in last year's world meet, took second in 53.09. Margo Geer was third and Ab-

bey Weitzeil was fourth to grab spots on the Pan Pacs team.

"I think there's room for improvement," said Manuel, newly signed to a suit endorsement deal with Tyr. "I've been doing pretty good things in practice that I haven't been doing before."

Five-time Olympic champion Missy Franklin was relegated to the C final of the 100 free, which she won in her first major meet since the 2016 Rio de Janeiro Games. She is coming back from two major shoulder surgeries and a struggle with depression. □



Katie Ledecky checks her time after winning the women's 800-meter freestyle during the U.S. national championships swimming meet Wednesday, July 25, 2018, in Irvine, Calif.

Associated Press

Insurers turn to technology to woo drivers

By **LACIE GLOVER**
NerdWallet

Americans love technology, and we expect companies to deliver delightful digital experiences.

Insurers aren't doing that — yet. So far, updates have been skin-deep.

"If you go to a carrier's website, the look and feel is pretty good, but the functionality is lacking," says Tom Super, director of J.D. Power's property and casualty insurance practice, who conducted the company's 2018 Insurance Digital Experience Study. People expect an experience that works like when they're at Amazon, Netflix and Uber, Super says.

Though most auto insurers have a long way to go, major companies and new players have rolled out technology-based features to win over new customers and meet drivers' demands.

Here's a look at what insurers are doing today — and what they might try next.

1. TRACKING DRIVING FOR DISCOUNTS, REWARDS

Many major insurers now offer telematics, technology that collects information about your driving behavior, in exchange for discounts or rewards.

Progressive was first, having launched its telematics-based program "Snapshot" in 2011. Customers who plug a device into their



In this May 25, 2018, file photo, motorists guide their vehicles down Interstate 70 near Evergreen, Colo.

Associated Press

cars' diagnostic ports to allow the company to monitor their driving can earn discounts. The technology — which tracks data like acceleration, hard braking, time of day and how much you drive — is also available in an app.

Other insurers that track driving behavior reward safe drivers with cash back, freebies or a combination of rewards and policy discounts. Often, drivers get a discount simply for opting in. While many companies say that driving behavior is monitored solely to determine discounts, Progressive might increase rates if your data show unsafe behavior.

ior.

2. SETTING PRICES BASED ON YOUR (ACTUAL) DRIVING

Auto insurers' use of demographic factors, such as age, gender and marital status, when setting rates isn't exactly popular with drivers.

A start-up, Root Insurance, is trying a new model: Pricing based on how you drive, which could save money for safe drivers. The insurance, currently available in 19 states with plans for five more, tracks driving behavior during a two- to six-week "test drive" before giving you a quote.

The company still considers

some demographic factors, but it isn't as interested in your personal details, says CEO and co-founder Alex Timm. "There's not really a 'great driver' demographic — we find them across the country, in all sorts of situations," Timm says.

Other companies are pricing coverage based on how much you drive. In select states, MetroMile, Allstate and Esurance, for example, offer policies where drivers pay a base rate, plus a per-mile rate.

3. EVALUATING DRIVING TO CURB BAD HABITS

Beyond offering discounts to customers who opt into monitoring programs, in-

surers want to make you a better, safer driver. Depending on the program, drivers may get immediate feedback through in-app driving reports and scores, or even from devices that beep when drivers brake hard or turn too sharply.

Insurers are also targeting distracted driving, which was reported in 9% of fatal crashes in 2016, according to the latest data from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. Because crashes often result in claims, insurers hope to see a decrease by monitoring cell phone use, a common driving distraction.

In addition to tracking how you drive, apps from Root and AAA can tell if you're using your phone while you drive, which will have an impact on your rate. Arity, a subsidiary of Allstate, is working to bring this capability to existing monitoring programs at Allstate and Esurance.

4. USING ALEXA TO HELP YOU AT HOME

Voice assistants, like Amazon's Alexa, are increasingly popular, and insurance companies are taking note. Customers at Liberty Mutual, the first auto insurer to develop a voice-activated resource for Alexa, can get a car insurance estimate or ask general insurance questions while doing household chores, for example. □



In this Oct. 13, 2015, file photo, the Twitter logo appears on a phone post on the floor of the New York Stock Exchange.

Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — Twitter shares fell Thursday after President Donald Trump said in a tweet the company was limiting visibility of prominent Republicans

and said he was going to look into the matter. The tweet came after a story in Vice magazine said prominent Republicans such as Republican

Twitter says it doesn't 'shadow ban' after Trump tweet

Party chair Ronna McDaniel were not showing up in one aspect of Twitter's search function.

While the accounts did show up during a general search, they didn't automatically populate in a drop-down bar when typing in the name.

In his tweet Trump accused Twitter of "shadow banning," or limiting visibility, of some Republicans and said it was "discriminatory and illegal." Twitter

said it does not "shadow ban." The company said it was aware that some accounts were not automatically populating but that was due to a bug they are working to fix. The social media site said in a statement it does not make judgments based on political views or substance of tweets.

Social media sites like Facebook and Twitter have been accused of having a bias against conserva-

tives before. Diamond and Silk, the Trump-supporting video personalities, had their page removed by Facebook earlier this year, leading to outcries of censorship, including from several congressmen. During his Congressional hearing in April, Facebook founder Mark Zuckerberg said this was an "enforcement error" and the page would be reinstated.

Twitter shares fell 4 percent in afternoon trading. □

Marriott, Airbnb see opportunity in selling 'experiences'

By DEE-ANN DURBIN

Associated Press

Hotel and home-sharing companies don't just want to sell you a room anymore. They also want to sell you an experience.

Want a "Game of Thrones" walking tour of Dubrovnik, Croatia? Marriott can book it for you. Want to create your own perfume in Paris? Airbnb can help.

Online operators like TripAdvisor and Expedia have been booking activities for more than a decade. But Marriott and Airbnb want a bigger piece of that business, so they've added thousands of offerings that travelers can book directly from their web sites.

Airbnb debuted experiences in late 2016; it now offers more than 20,000 activities in 800 cities globally through the "Experiences" tab on its web site. There's a wide range, from a \$12 yoga class on a Nashville porch to a \$175 encounter with wolves near Seattle. Local hosts apply to Airbnb with tour ideas and Airbnb puts them on its site

if they're accepted.

The larger Marriott Moments program, which launched in October, offers 120,000 experiences in 1,000 destinations, from a \$27 walking tour of Detroit to a \$588 full-day tour of Tuscany. Marriott's partner, online tour search company PlacePass, finds and vets the experiences.

Marriott still offers around 10,000 exclusive activities for its loyalty program members. Those offers — like a pastry class at Le Cordon Bleu cooking school in Paris — can only be booked with Marriott or Starwood points. On both sites, experiences cost the same as they would if travelers booked directly with tour providers. West Wine Tours, which gives tours of Sonoma and Napa, California, in a restored Volkswagen bus, charges \$125 on its site as well as through Airbnb.

But Marriott offers a perk: Members of its loyalty program can earn points for booking experiences. Airbnb is working on its own loyalty program, but details



In this May 11, 2018 photo provided by Danielle Oteri, Oteri poses with a plate of pasta in Naples, Italy.

Associated Press

haven't been announced. Sarah Ellis booked a bike tour in Rome, a walking

tour in Copenhagen and a Harry Potter walking tour in Edinburgh, Scotland,

through Airbnb. She also booked a "Sherlock" tour through TripAdvisor in London, but felt it was too big and commercial.

"The less commercialized and monopolized and standardized the better for an authentic experience," said Ellis, a librarian from Fresno, California.

Others say they would avoid booking through a big company. Matthew Kagan, a partner at a Santa Monica, California-based communications firm, said he wouldn't necessarily book anything through Airbnb or Marriott even though he's a member of Marriott's loyalty program.

"I find sites like Yelp and other crowd-sourced options very helpful because I believe I'm getting real locals' knowledge," he said. But Elizabeth Barber, an associate professor at Temple University's School of Tourism and Hospitality Management, thinks Marriott's experiences appeal to travelers who want a trusted name vetting their activities. □

Visits slip, but higher prices help lift McDonald's US sales

Associated Press

OAK BROOK, Ill. (AP) — Higher prices are helping McDonald's ring up more sales in the U.S., even though people are visiting less often.

McDonald's said Thursday that customers spent more on average per visit during the second quarter, partly because people also added more extras onto their orders. Still, executives said they need to get customers visits growing.

"We're not yet where we need to be," CEO Steve Easterbrook said during a call with analysts.

The decrease in visits to existing McDonald's in its flagship market came even though there were fewer stores than year ago. McDonald's has been shrinking its U.S. store base in recent years, and now has

less than 14,000 domestic locations. The results come as McDonald's fights to win back U.S. customers by modernizing operations, with changes like ordering kiosks and delivery. It's also making tweaks to its menu, such as by using fresh instead of frozen beef patties with select burgers.

To keep pace in a highly competitive fast-food market, McDonald's said it will roll out new offers to attract deal seekers.

For the quarter, McDonald's said sales rose 2.6 percent at domestic stores open at least 13 months. The metric is considered a key indicator because it strips out the effect of newly opened and closed locations.

McDonald's is facing challenges elsewhere too. The company is also seeing customer visits decline in

China, something it said could be partly blamed on trade discussions affecting customer sentiment.

But overall, the company fared better overseas with global sales up 4 percent at comparable stores. Its worldwide store count also continues to climb; the chain now has more than 37,400 locations.

For the period ended June 30, McDonald's earned \$1.5 billion, or \$1.90 per share. Earnings, adjusted for restructuring costs, were \$1.99 per share, or 7 cents better than Wall Street was expecting, according to a survey by Zacks Investment Research.

Total revenue of \$5.35 billion in the period also edged out forecasts. Shares of McDonald's Corp. slipped 2 percent to \$155.60 in Thursday trading. □



This July 18, 2018, file photo, shows a sign outside a McDonald's restaurant in Pittsburgh.

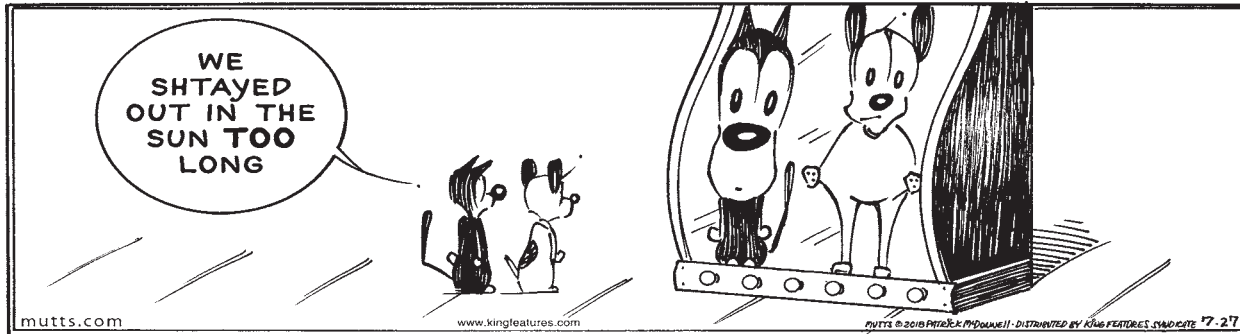
Associated Press



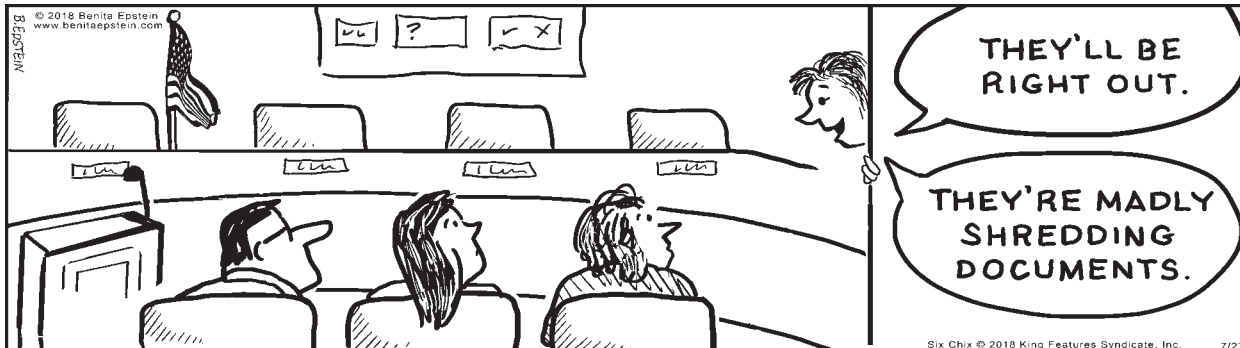

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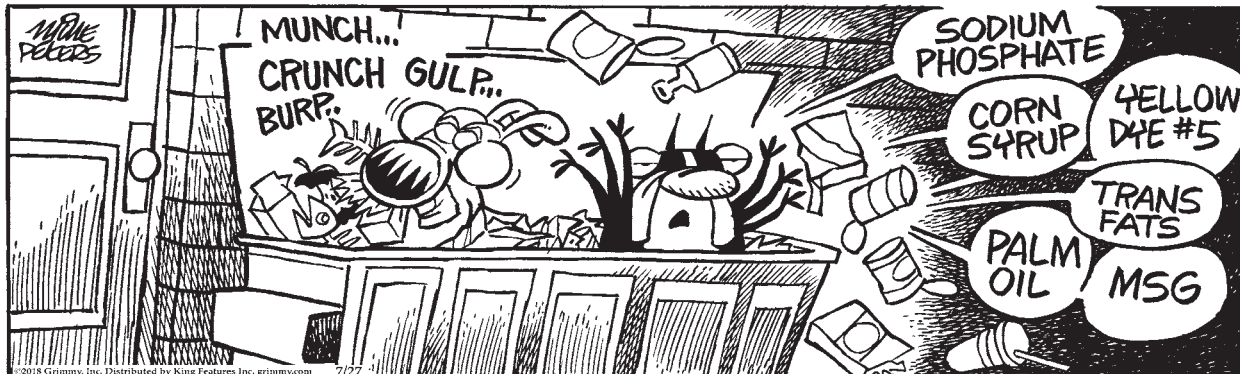
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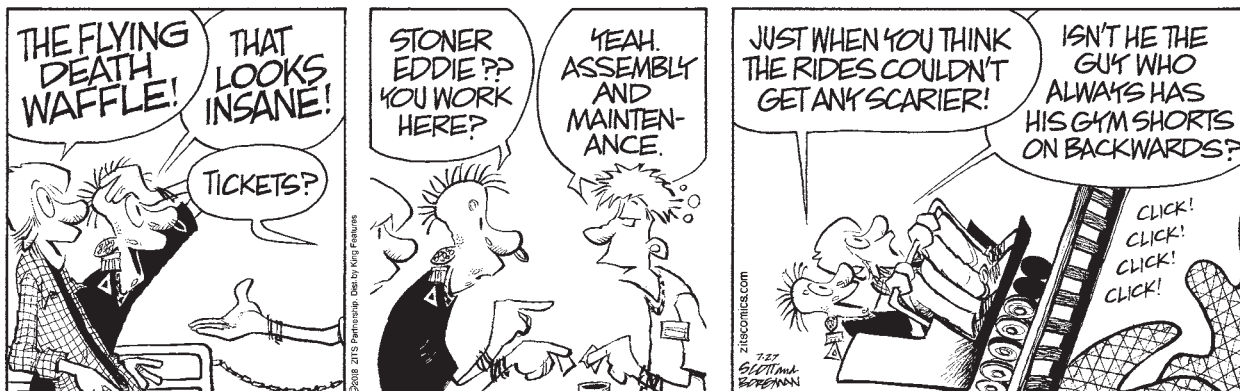
Mother Goose & Grimm



Baby Blues



Zits



Conceptis Sudoku

7		4						9
	3							
		4				7	5	
					9	4	2	8
	5	2				3	9	
9	4	7	8					
	1	8				6		
							4	
7					3		1	

Difficulty Level ★★★★★

7/27

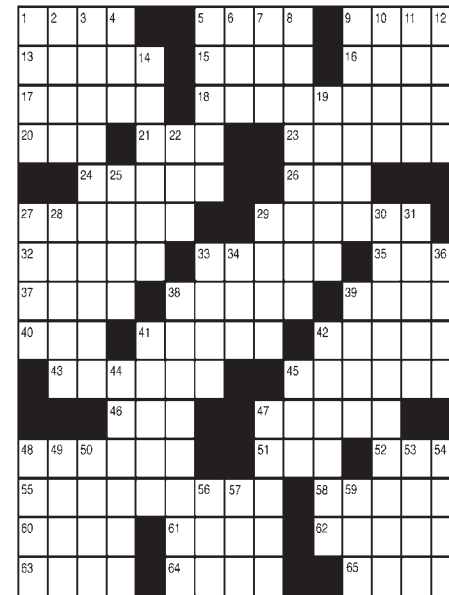
Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Sunday.

Yesterday's puzzle answer

9	5	7	3	4	8	2	6	1
2	1	3	6	9	7	5	4	8
6	8	4	1	5	2	7	9	3
1	9	2	4	3	6	8	7	5
3	7	8	9	2	5	4	1	6
5	4	6	8	7	1	3	2	9
4	3	1	7	8	9	6	5	2
7	2	9	5	6	3	1	8	4
8	6	5	2	1	4	9	3	7

ACROSS

- 1 Spinning toys
- 5 Husband or wife
- 9 Farmer's concern
- 13 Dog-; like ragged pages
- 15 Bator; Mongolia's capital
- 16 Bee colony
- 17 up; become happy again
- 18 Deserters
- 20 Ho-; boring
- 21 Chicken king
- 23 Feel remorseful
- 24 California athlete
- 26 Word of mild surprise
- 27 Shade of red
- 29 Put down, but forget where
- 32 Straighten
- 33 First aid kit item
- 35 Soft drink
- 37 Large amount
- 38 Funeral hymn
- 39 Period of time
- 40 certain extent; somewhat
- 41 Items in a billfold
- 42 Social class
- 43 Sheep's wool
- 45 Very dirty
- 46 Nov. 11 honoree
- 47 Restaurant
- 48 Large antelope
- 51 Miner's find
- 52 Many a time
- 55 Mushroom
- 58 Furniture wood
- 60 "Get a "; cry to an airhead
- 61 In the past
- 62 Blaze residue
- 63 on to; saved
- 64 Long-tailed rodents
- 65 Tush



Created by Jacqueline E. Mathews

7/27/18

- 5 Wall painting
- 6 Alcoholic drink
- 7 Sunbathe
- 8 Invigorate
- 9 Place of worship
- 10 Ferris wheel or carousel
- 11 Kiln
- 12 control; bug spraying service
- 14 "Puff, the Magic "
- 19 Waterbirds
- 22 Actor Cariou
- 25 Holiday beverages
- 27 Creamy drink
- 28 Reserved
- 29 Coffee cups
- 30 Punctuation mark
- 31 Springtime of life
- 33 away; donate
- 34 "You what you eat"
- 36 Hunted animal
- 38 Absolute ruler
- 39 Vigorous
- 41 for; empathizes with

DOWN

- 1 Texas ; univ. in Lubbock
- 2 Hawaiian island
- 3 Done before the wedding
- 4 Look at

Thursday's Puzzle Solved

PRY	SCALD	STOW
BOAS	ERNIE	COVE
SALE	LANKA	RUED
DEPRESSED	URNS	
TICS	ELF	
ACCEPT	BONAFIDE	
PARTS	DANES	CAN
APES	PAGED	LIFT
RED	LANES	CANOE
TROPICAL	HUNGER	
LEI	FORD	
FETA	FAULTLESS	
EARN	INPUT	RAPT
TREE	STOKE	SCAR
ELKS	MINER	STY

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- 42 Film industry
- 44 Sidestepped
- 45 Evergreen tree
- 47 Robert and Elizabeth
- 48 Poison ivy symptom
- 49 Burrowing animal
- 50 Newman or Simon
- 53 Bloodsucking insect
- 54 Examination
- 56 Stop dime
- 57 Fall month: abbr.
- 59 Beast of burden



This July 22, 2018 photo provided by the Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Services shows a native South American fish known as a pacu that was caught in a southwestern Oklahoma.

Associated Press

11-year-old girl catches piranha relative in Oklahoma lake

By KEN MILLER
OKLAHOMA CITY (AP) — An 11-year-old girl has quite the fish tale: A rare pacu with human-like teeth chomped down on the worm at the end of her line while she was fishing with her grandparents and brother in an Oklahoma lake. But Kennedy Smith isn't exaggerating when she describes her catch. Caddo County Game Warden Tyler Howser confirms that the fish was a pacu, a relative of the piranha that is native to South America and can grow up to 50 pounds (22 kilograms). Kennedy's fish weighed about 1 pound (half a kilogram), according to Howser and Kennedy's grandmother Sandra Whaley. Kennedy says she initially was "really excited" to have caught a fish Sunday in Fort Cobb Lake, about 55 miles (89 kilometers) southwest of Oklahoma City. She was shocked when the fish bit her grandmother, as Whaley removed the hook from its mouth. "I was confused because

I knew that fish with teeth are not normal. It was weird. They were human-like and that made it even weirder," Kennedy told The Associated Press Thursday. Whaley said she suffered no ill-effects from the bite. Howser said the fish was likely purchased as a pet and was released into the lake when it grew too large for the aquarium of the family that owned it.

Pacu are considered an invasive species that can destroy the native Oklahoma fish ecosystem and habitat, so the fish Kennedy caught was taken by the Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation and destroyed. Howser said he recognized the species immediately. "I've actually caught one myself," Howser said. "As soon as I saw (it) I said 'I know what that is.'"



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Einstein's theory of relativity passes yet another test

By EMILIANO RODRIGUEZ
MEGA

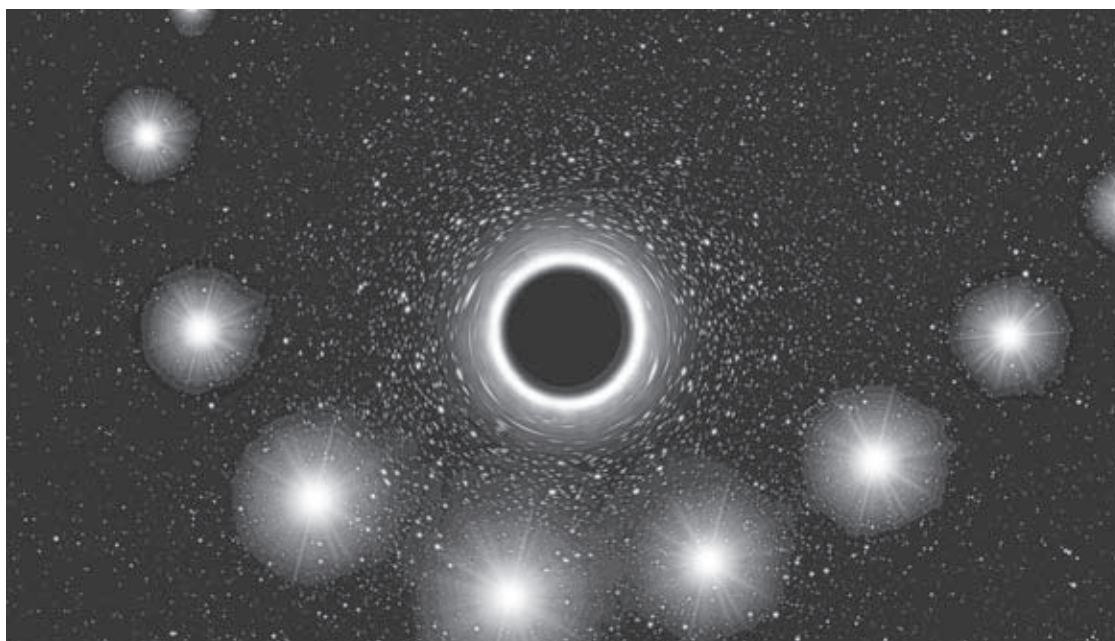
NEW YORK (AP) — More than a century after Albert Einstein proposed it, his theory of general relativity has passed another test.

With giant telescopes pointed at the center of our galaxy, a team of European researchers observed a fast-moving star that got close to a monstrous black hole. They saw that the black hole distorted the light waves from the star in a way that agrees with Einstein's theory.

The result was reported Thursday in the journal *Astronomy & Astrophysics*.

Einstein's theory says the fabric of the universe is not simply space, but a more complex entity called space-time, which is warped by the presence of heavy objects.

Black holes offer a good opportunity to test that



This artist's impression provided by the European Southern Observatory in July 2018 shows the path of the star S2 as it passes close to the supermassive black hole at the center of the Milky Way galaxy.

Associated Press

idea. The one that lies at the heart of the Milky Way is 4 million times as massive as our sun.

"I, just like every physicist in the world, would have

loved to finally see a crack in Einstein's relativity," said Ohio State University astrophysicist Paul Sutter. "But he's outsmarted us."

But confirming Einstein's

work — again, "feels like we're kind of beating a dead horse," said Sutter, who wasn't part of the research team led by Reinhard Genzel of the Max

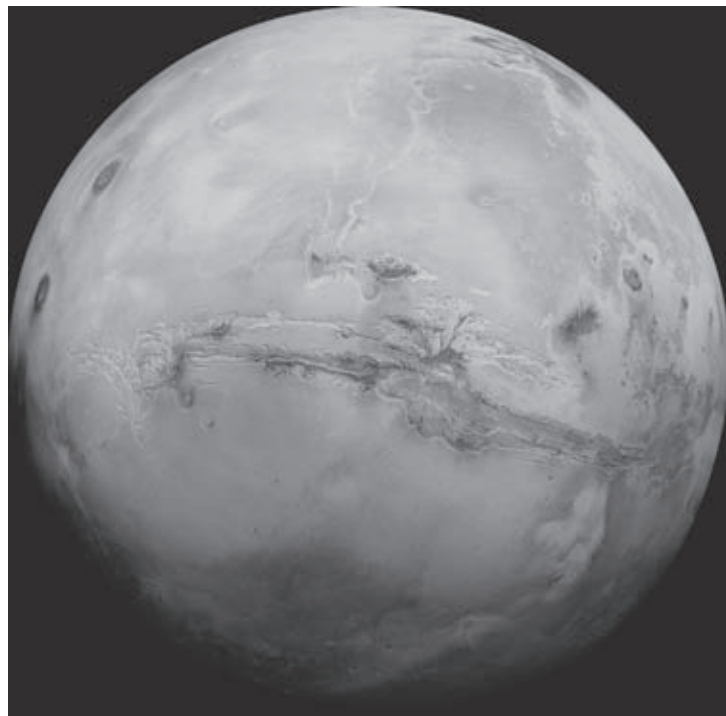
Planck Institute for Extraterrestrial Physics in Garching, Germany. Scientists know that the theory still doesn't explain everything about the universe. So they keep testing it time and again. So far, nobody has been able to overthrow it.

Although the effects of general relativity have been seen before, this was the first detection made by observing the motion of a star near a supermassive black hole.

"To me, that's what makes this so cool," said Clifford Will, a University of Florida physicist who did not participate in the research.

Will hopes his colleagues will be able to discover stars even closer to the black hole, where the effects of relativity would be stronger. This finding "is really the opening episode," he said. "The future, I think, is going to be very exciting." □

Mars making closest approach to Earth in 15 years



This image made available by NASA shows the planet Mars. This composite photo was created from over 100 images of Mars taken by Viking Orbiters in the 1970s.

Associated Press

By MARCIA DUNN

AP Aerospace Writer

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla.

(AP) — Now's the time to catch Mars in the night sky. Next week, the red planet is making its closest approach to Earth in 15 years. The two planets will be just 35.8 million miles (57.6 million kilometers) apart next Tuesday. And on Friday, Mars will be in opposition. That means Mars and the sun will be on exact opposite sides of Earth. That same day, parts of the world will see a total lunar eclipse.

Mars is already brighter than usual and will shine even more — as Tuesday nears. Astronomers expect good viewing through early Au-

gust.

A massive dust storm presently engulfing Mars, however, is obscuring surface details normally visible through telescopes. The Martian atmosphere is so full of dust that NASA's Opportunity rover can't recharge — not enough sunlight can reach its solar panels — and so it's been silent since June 10. Flight controllers don't expect to hear from 14-year-old Opportunity until the storm subsides, and maybe not even then.

The good news about all the Martian dust is that it reflects sunlight, which makes for an even brighter red planet, said Widener University astronomer Harry Augensen.

"It's magnificent. It's as bright as an airplane landing light," Augensen said. "Not quite as bright as Venus, but still because of the reddish, orange-ish-red color, you really can't miss it in the sky."

In 2003, Mars and Earth were the closest in nearly 60,000 years — 34.6 million miles (55.7 million kilometers). NASA said that won't happen again until 2287. The next close approach, meanwhile, in 2020, will be 38.6 million miles (62 million kilometers), according to NASA.

Observatories across the U.S. are hosting Mars-viewing events next week. Los Angeles' Griffith Observatory will provide a live online view of Mars early Tuesday.

The total lunar eclipse on Friday will be visible in Australia, Africa, Asia, Europe and South America. A total lunar eclipse occurs when the sun, Earth and moon line up perfectly, casting Earth's shadow on the moon. Friday's will be long, lasting 1 hour and 43 minutes. □

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Laferte and Moreno to pay tribute to Selena, and immigrants

By SIGAL RATNER-ARIAS

Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — The music of Selena will be used to entertain and educate during a free concert that is in part designed to raise awareness about the plight of undocumented immigrants facing deportation. Latin Grammy-winners Mon Laferte and Gaby Moreno are among those performing at "Selena for Sanctuary," a free concert that's part of the summer festival Lincoln Center Out of Doors. The concert seeks to raise awareness about the dire situation of undocumented immigrant that has caused a national outcry.

"I am very excited to be part of this event," said Laferte, who is from Chile. "I admire Selena and I grew up singing her songs. It is an honor for me to be able to sing her songs and to support this initiative with a subject like migration, which concerns us all."

Created by Doris Munoz, daughter of undocumented immigrants, "Selena for Sanctuary" pays tribute to the most successful artist in Latin music while fighting for a cause. It arrives at the outdoor stage of the pres-



Mon Laferte performs at the Latin Grammy Acoustic Session in Mexico City and Gaby Moreno arrives at the Latin Recording Academy Person of the Year Tribute in Las Vegas on Nov. 16, 2016. Associated Press

tigious Lincoln Center after having smaller editions in South California.

"This event started as a simple idea and call to action after the current administration threatened our community's sanctuary cities which affected my working-class undocumented parents," Munoz said, referring to the poli-

cies of President Donald Trump.

She added: "It only feels necessary to leverage the platform we have been blessed with to help our community in need. This event is as personal as it gets, there are millions of families like my own and if this inspires at least one person to get involved we've

done our job."

The show will also feature singers Cuco and Nina Diaz, as well as special guest appearances by guitarist Chris Perez, Selena's widower; Omar Apollo, and August Eve. More than two decades after her passing, Selena Quintanilla still inspires fans and musicians alike.

"We know Selena is a Tejano music icon and a legend, but beyond that, she represents the Latin American people as someone who fought for her dreams, overcoming many difficulties, always defending tooth and nail the Latino roots she carried inside," Moreno said in an email. Known simply by Selena, the Texan singer-songwriter broke barriers for women in Latin music and opened the floodgates for a new generation of contemporary artists of Latin descent who would go on to enjoy huge popularity with mainstream American audiences.

She was fatally shot by her fan club's president at 23. She has sold more than 65 million units worldwide, making her the best-selling female artist in Latin music history.

To Cuco, the late Tejano star launched a new era of representation for people of color in the industry.

"This event is important to me because it paves a way for people that went through the same struggle that my parents went through," said the Mexican-American singer. □

A play about straight white men on Broadway makes history

By JOHN CARUCCI

Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — The play that just opened at the Helen Hayes Theatre on Broadway may have a cast dominated by white men but history has been made behind the scenes. Young Jean Lee became the first Asian-American woman playwright to have a play open on Broadway when "Straight White Men" made its official debut Monday.

Breaking the glass ceiling for Asian-American woman playwrights was a special honor for Lee. But that distinction comes with some pressure.

"It makes me really hope that this show does well because it puts a little additional pressure on you because you want that door to stay open," Lee said.



This image released by Polk PR shows, Stephen Payne, Josh Charles, Armie Hammer and Paul Schneider during a performance of "Straight White Men," in New York.

Associated Press

The playwright is thankful for shows like "Hamilton" for helping pave the way, by proving "shows by people of color... could fill houses." Her father-son drama stars Armie Hammer, Josh

Charles and Paul Schneider playing brothers. Stephen Payne plays their dad. The story takes place on Christmas Eve as the family gathers for the holiday, eating Chinese takeout in their plaid pajamas and trash-

talking one another. But when a question is raised that they can't answer, they are forced to confront their own identities.

Lee said she was inspired by the idea of white men feeling marginalized because

they were now being labeled. But she wanted to show both sides of issue, and let the audience draw its own conclusions.

"I just noticed that you know there was this sort of historical shift happening in my lifetime where all of a sudden, straight white men were suddenly experiencing what it's like to get labeled," she said. "So, I just got really interested in exploring that."

Hammer, whose film roles include "Call Me by Your Name" and "The Social Network," is making his Broadway debut in the play.

"This was an amazing chance to really look at the concept of white privilege and what it means, and how people in this situation communicate with each other and understand each other," Hammer said. □

Tom Cruise thwarts the apocalypse on a broken ankle

By JOCELYN NOVECK

And so, fellow moviegoers: Ask not what your country can do for you. Ask what Tom Cruise can — and will — do for you.

The answer is anything. The man will do anything to entertain you. At age 56, when the rest of us are making chiropractor appointments and upping our corrective lenses, Cruise will jump out of a plane for you, into a lightning storm. He'll learn to fly a helicopter for you, all for one nausea-inducing helicopter piloting stunt — yep, he's piloting AND acting — that sends him into a death spiral in "Mission: Impossible - Fallout." It should go without saying that Cruise will hang off a sheer cliff for you. Oh, also: he will dangle off a rope from a helicopter, then bungee jump off it for you.

And finally, Mr. Cruise will shatter his ankle jumping from one building to another for you — and then sprint like hell on that broken ankle. Because, what's an MI film without a Cruise sprint? One day, if this continues,



This image released by Paramount Pictures shows, Simon Pegg, Rebecca Ferguson, Tom Cruise and Ving Rhames in a scene from "Mission: Impossible - Fallout."

Associated Press

it will surely seem silly. One day, people will chuckle sympathetically at the exploits of this well-meaning but wrinkled movie star, perhaps in his 80s then, putting his life in danger to please his fans. Now, though, is not that day. With his partner, returning

director-writer Christopher McQuarrie, Cruise delivers all the above in the ridiculously entertaining "Fallout," his sixth outing as Ethan Hunt. As for the plot, well, you may chuckle in confusion. It gets unnecessarily complicated. For most movies, this would be a much bigger problem. But because "Fallout" moves so quickly from one crazy stunt to another, it doesn't matter. You'll think, "Hmm, what?" But then, "Whoa! Is Tom about to jump off that building?" We begin, as always, with a new mission — this time, it arrives in a hollowed-out copy of Homer's "Odyssey," perhaps a reference to Hunt's own journey. Hunt must get his hands on three missing plutonium cores. □

World premieres at Venice for Gosling, Cooper movies



Journalists are silhouetted against the logo presenting the 75th edition of the festival, during its presentation in Rome, Wednesday, July 25, 2018.

Associated Press

Associated Press

ROME (AP) — The Venice Film Festival will feature plenty of Hollywood star power, including premieres for a biopic of astronaut Neil Armstrong starring Ryan Gosling, a period western by the Coen brothers with Liam Neeson, and Bradley Cooper's directorial debut starring Lady Gaga.

The 75th edition of the world's oldest film festival opens on Aug. 29 with the world premiere of "First Man" by Damien Chazelle. Like his previous film "La La

Land," which also opened the festival and earned six Oscars, it stars Gosling, who plays Armstrong.

"The Ballad of Buster Scruggs" is the new offering from the Coen brothers. It started out as a television series before being turned into a movie featuring Tom Waits.

Emma Stone, Olivia Colman and Rachel Weisz star in an irreverent royal comedy set in the early 18th century called "The Favourite," by Yorgos Lanthimos, which also makes its debut

on the Lido.

Tilda Swinton and Dakota Johnson are paired in the horror movie "Suspiria" by Luca Guadagnino, who earned acclaim for last year's "Call Me By Your Name."

Among other films being shown for the first time are "Roma," Alfonso Cuarón's first film since "Gravity;" Mike Leigh's "Peterloo," about an 1819 massacre in northern England; and "Sunset" by Hungarian director Laszlo Nemes, who captured the 2016 Academy Award for Best Foreign Language Film with "Son of Saul."

Debuting out of competition for the Golden Lion are Bradley Cooper's "A Star is Born," in which he stars alongside Gaga, and the police abuse drama "Dragged Across Concrete" with Mel Gibson and Vince Vaughn.

Golden Lions for career achievements will be presented to British actress Vanessa Redgrave and Canadian filmmaker David Cronenberg at the festival, which runs through Sept. 8. □

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JULY 26 - AUGUST 1

TOM CRUISE | HENRY CAVILL
**MISSION: IMPOSSIBLE
FALLOUT** [PG-13]
CXC PREMIUM LARGE FORMAT AUDITORIUM
2D MON-FRI 6:00 | 9:05
SAT-SUN 2:55 | 6:00 | 9:05
2D MON-THURS 4:45 | 7:50
FRIDAY 4:45 | 7:50 | 10:55
SATURDAY 1:40 | 4:45 | 7:50 | 10:55
SUN & HOL 1:40 | 4:45 | 7:50

NICOLAS CAGE | KRISTEN BELL
TOGO! MOVIES [PG]
MON-THURS 4:40 | 6:45 | 8:50
FRIDAY 4:40 | 6:45 | 8:50 | 10:55
SATURDAY 2:35 | 4:40 | 6:45 | 8:50 | 10:55
SUN & HOL 2:35 | 4:40 | 6:45 | 8:50

DAVEED DIGGS | RAFAEL CASAL
BLINDSPOTTING [R]
MON-THURS & SUN 7:20 | 9:30
FRI-SAT 7:20 | 9:30 | 11:40

DENZEL WASHINGTON | PEDRO PASCAL
THE EQUALIZER [R]
MON-THURS & SUN 3:55 | 6:35 | 9:15
FRI-SAT 3:55 | 6:35 | 9:15 | 10:50

AMANDA SEYFRIED | MERYL STREEP
MAMMA MIA! [PG-13]
MON-THURS 4:10 | 6:40 | 9:10
FRIDAY 4:10 | 6:40 | 9:10 | 11:40
SATURDAY 1:40 | 4:10 | 6:40 | 9:10 | 11:40
SUN & HOL 1:40 | 4:10 | 6:40 | 9:10

DWAYNE JOHNSON | NEVE CAMPBELL
SKYSCRAPER [PG-13]
MON-THURS 4:50 | 7:05 | 9:20
FRIDAY 4:50 | 7:05 | 9:20 | 11:35
SAT 2:35 | 4:50 | 7:05 | 9:20 | 11:35
SUN & HOL 2:35 | 4:50 | 7:05 | 9:20

ADAM SANDLER | SELENA GOMEZ
HOTEL TRANSYLVANIA [PG]
MON-FRI 4:20 | 6:30 | 8:40
SAT & SUN 2:10 | 4:20 | 6:30 | 8:40

PAUL RUDD | EVANGELINE LILLY
ANT-MAN AND THE WASP [PG-13]
MON-FRI 4:45
SAT & SUN 2:10 | 4:45

STARTING AUGUST 2: DISNEY CHRISTOPHER ROBIN, THE DARKEST MINDS, SEARCHING, THE SPY WHO DUMPED ME

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Smile, pardner: 'Deadwood' movie gets HBO greenlight

By LYNN ELBER

BEVERLY HILLS, Calif. (AP)

— A roundup of news from the Television Critics Association summer meeting, at which TV networks and streaming services are presenting details on upcoming programs.

BACK TO THE BLACK HILLS

"Deadwood" fans can exhale.

HBO says it's greenlighted a long-discussed movie based on the Western drama that ended a dozen years ago.

HBO programming chief Casey Bloys said Wednesday that production is scheduled to begin in October. An air date has yet to be set but it could debut in spring 2019, he said.

Bloys told a TV critics' meeting it was a logistical "nightmare" getting the ensemble cast's schedules to align, but it finally worked out.

The critically acclaimed, award-winning "Deadwood" was set in the rough-and-tumble South Dakota mining town of the title.

The series aired from 2004-06 with stars including Timothy Olyphant, Ian McShane and Molly Parker.

It was created by David Milch, known for his work on



In this Feb. 9, 2005 file photo, David Milch creator of the HBO series "Deadwood," appears on the set with Larry Cedar and Peter Jason in Santa Clarita, Calif.

Associated Press

the contemporary police dramas "NYPD Blue" and "Hill Street Blues."

UNDER NEW OWNERSHIP

HBO's programming chief pushed back Wednesday against the possibility that the cable channel will suffer under new owner AT&T. Casey Bloys, speaking to a meeting of TV critics, said there are no plans to choose volume over qual-

ity for its shows.

"No one is asking us to take pitches of a 'Love Boat' reboot or anything like that," he said.

As support, Bloys cited comments made during an earnings call Tuesday by John Stankey, who manages the new AT&T division that includes HBO and other Time Warner media assets. AT&T acquired Time

Warner in an \$85 billion deal concluded earlier this month.

Stankey said that the aim was to invest more in premium content at HBO, home to "Game of Thrones," "Big Little Lies" and "Westworld." In contrast, he reportedly told HBO staff recently to prepare for a difficult year. Bloys called Tuesday's remarks "music to our ears."

Time Warner had curtailed programming investment as it readied itself for sale "so this is the first time in a long time we've heard anybody talking about investing in programming," he said.

HBO has long held the high ground in acclaimed shows but is facing challenges from big-spending newcomers including streaming services Netflix and Amazon. In the recently announced Emmy nominations, Netflix ended HBO's 17-year streak as the most-nominated outlet by snagging 112 bids to HBO's 108. The outcome was unsurprising given the overall volume of programming, Bloys said, a reference to the phenomenon dubbed "peak TV" that has given viewers nearly 500 series.

Getting four fewer nominations "is not going to change the type of programs that we develop and produce at all," he said, but added that HBO does face the challenge of creating more programming without changing its approach. "So that's what we're in discussion now. What's the right level for us with this increased funding?" he said. □

Boz Scaggs revisits influences on 'Out of the Blues'

By PABLO GORONDI

Associated Press

Boz Scaggs, "Out of the Blues" (Concord Records) Sometimes with more gloss, at times with more grit, but always with great feeling, Boz Scaggs has kept some form of the blues close to the surface during most of his career, which has already sailed past the 50-year milestone.

On "Out of the Blues," the last of an informal trilogy also including "Memphis" and "A Fool to Care" revisiting his roots and influences, Scaggs covers some superior blues tunes from decades past, along with a Neil Young song and originals by long-time collaborator Jack Walroth.

Unlike its two predecessors, "Out of the Blues" was pro-



This cover image released by Concord Records shows "Out of the Blues," a release by Boz Scaggs.

Associated Press

duced by Scaggs instead of Steve Jordan, but some of the musicians from the earlier releases are back, including bassist Willie Weeks and guitarist Ray Parker Jr., topped up with additions including Jim Keltner (drums), Jim Cox (keys) and a lefty-righty combo of Texas six-strings, Doyle Bramhall II and Charlie Sexton. Walroth's "Rock and Stick" has shades of soul and Andy Summers' echoing guitar, with Scaggs' falsetto emphasizing the emotions, while "I've Just Got to Forget You" — associated with Bland — is pure regret and heartbreak. Jimmy McCracklin's "I've Just Got to Know," based here on the magnetic Magic Sam version — deals with a step earlier in the relationship,

even if the writing's on the wall.

"Little Miss Night and Day," a hardboiled rocker with solos from Cox, Bramhall and Sexton, is Scaggs' only songwriting credit, shared with Walroth, whose grooves fit right in with the rest of the repertoire.

Scaggs sounds aptly fatigued on Young's "On the Beach," which features great guitar work by Bramhall and a disillusionment with fame that sometimes even an everyman can emphasize with: "Though my problems are meaningless/That don't make them go away."

The blues suit Scaggs and thankfully "The Feeling Is Gone" is just the last song on the album, not a reflection of his performances. □

Study: Lowering blood pressure helps prevent mental decline

By **MARILYNN MARCHIONE**
CHICAGO (AP) — Lowering

blood pressure more than usually recommended not only helps prevent heart problems, it also cuts the risk of mental decline that often leads to Alzheimer's disease, a major study finds. It's the first time a single step has been clearly shown to help prevent a dreaded condition that has had people trying crossword puzzles, diet supplements and a host of other things in hope of keeping their mind sharp.

In the study, people treated to a top blood pressure reading of 120 instead of 140 were 19 percent less likely to develop mild cognitive impairment. They also had fewer signs of damage on brain scans, and there was a possible trend toward fewer cases of dementia.

"This is a big breakthrough," said Dr. Jeff Williamson of Wake Forest Baptist Medical Center in North Carolina. "It's more important than ever to work with your physician to ensure that you have good blood pressure control."

He led the study and gave results Wednesday at the Alzheimer's Association International Conference in Chicago. They're considered preliminary until published, expected later this year.

Independent experts cheered the news.

"We have long known that high blood pressure is bad for your heart. Now we're also learning it's bad for your brain," said James Hendrix, director of global science initiatives at the Alzheimer's Association.

THE BRAIN-BLOOD PRESSURE LINK

About 50 million people worldwide have dementia, and Alzheimer's is the most common type. There is no cure — current medicines such as Aricept and Namenda just ease symptoms — so prevention is key.

Roughly half of adults in the United States have high blood pressure under guidelines adopted last year that define it as a top number of 130 or more,



Margaret Graham, 74, has her blood pressure checked while visiting the Wake Forest Baptist Medical Center in Winston-Salem, N.C., on Friday, July 13, 2018.

Associated Press

rather than 140. Normal is under 120.

High pressure can damage blood vessels and has long been linked to a higher risk for dementia. But it's not been known if lowering pressure would reduce that risk or by how much. The federally funded study was designed to test this in the most rigorous way.

ABOUT THE STUDY

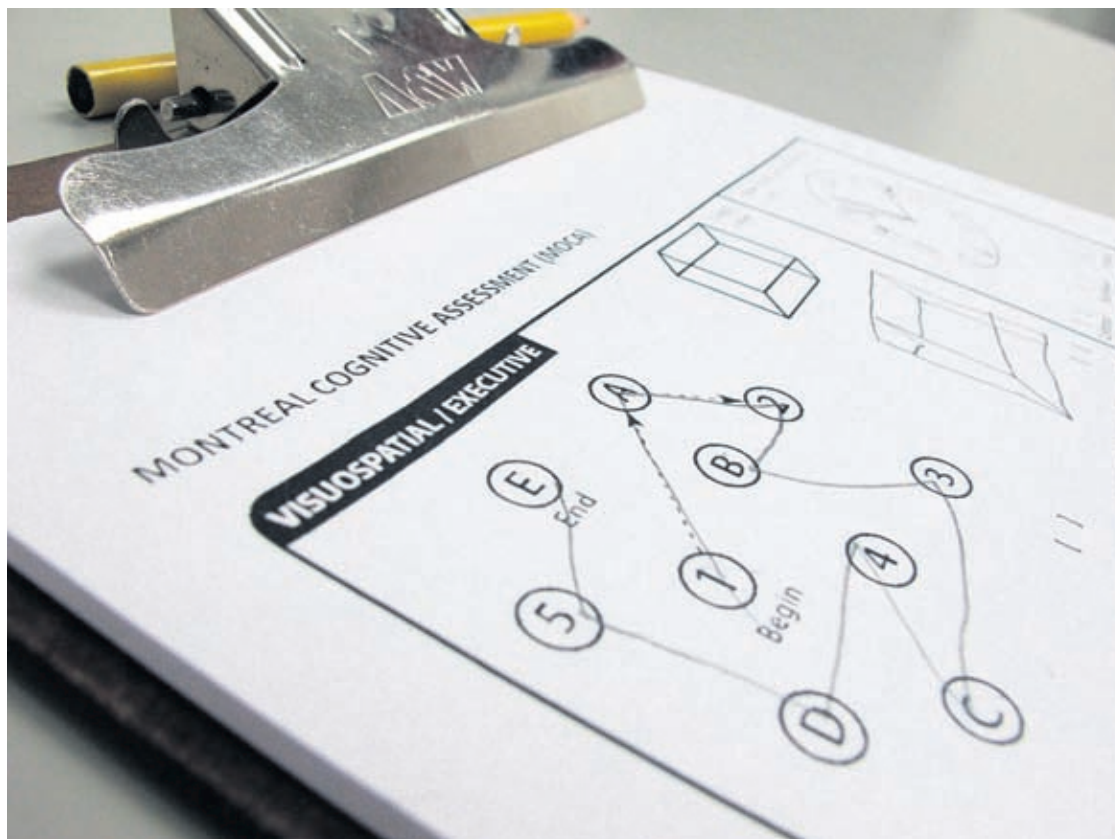
It involved more than 9,300 people with high pressure.

Half got two medicines, on average, to get their top reading below 140. The rest got three drugs, on average, and aimed for 120. During the study, the top pressure averaged 121 in the intensive-treatment group and 135 in the other group.

The study was stopped in 2015, nearly two years early, when it became clear that lower pressure helped prevent heart problems

and deaths. But tests of thinking skills continued for two more years, and these new results were revealed on Wednesday.

Researchers saw a 19 percent lower risk of mild cognitive impairment, or MCI, in the intensive-treatment group — 285 cases versus 348 in the higher pressure group. About half of people with MCI develop dementia over the next five years.



A cognitive test sheet completed by a study participant sits on an examination room table at Wake Forest Baptist Medical Center in Winston-Salem, N.C., on Friday, July 13, 2018.

Associated Press

"It's really more important to prevent MCI than dementia in some ways. It's like preventing high cholesterol rather than a heart attack," Williamson said.

There also were fewer dementia cases in the intensive-treatment group but there were too few to say lower blood pressure was the reason. Dementia takes longer to develop than mild impairment does, so doctors think the difference may widen over time. MRI scans on 454 participants showed that those in the lower pressure group had less white matter lesions — areas of scarring or damage from injury, such as inadequate blood supply.

"It matches" the other results on thinking skills and bolsters the evidence that lowering blood pressure helps, said Laurie Ryan, a dementia scientist at the National Institute on Aging.

HOW LOW TO GO?

This study's previous results led to last fall's guidelines change, setting high pressure at 130. Some doctors have criticized that as too aggressive, but the new results, showing benefits to the brain, "support and maybe even extend the guidelines," Williamson said. "The goal of below 130 is extremely important."

The study did not test specific blood pressure drugs. Instead, each participant's doctor chose which ones to use from the more than a dozen available.

When the heart results were announced a few years ago, doctors said that too-low pressure, fainting episodes and some kidney problems were a little more common in the intensively treated group but that those risks were considered worth the benefits of a lower risk of heart trouble and death.

Getting to the lower level meant using one more medicine, and "90 percent of these are generic and cost less than a dollar a day," Williamson said. "For a modest cost this has a tremendously important health benefit for people." □